JOSÉ FERNANDO SERRANO-AMAYA

HOMOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN ARMED CONFLICT AND POLITICAL TRANSITION

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José Fernando Serrano-Amaya

Homophobic Violence in Armed Conflict and Political Transition

José Fernando Serrano-Amaya
Bogota, Colombia

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Y una vez más, a mi madre, María Helena Amaya. Es gracias a ella que he entendido lo que es luchar por hacerse una vida digna de vivirse.

Series Editor Foreword

Homophobia has become central to the global political agenda. While media and academic attention to the issue has increased recently, sexual minority rights entered the national and international policy discussions since the mid-1990s. In national contexts, these rights emerged as demands around anti-discrimination and, in some cases, as claims over same-sex marriage. In multilateral fora, calls for the application of human rights law in relation to sexual orientation can be retraced back to the 1995 Beijing IV World Conference on Women. In the course of the last ten years, however, debates around the human rights violations based on sexual orientation have intensified significantly at the United Nations and other global and regional multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank and the Organization of American States. Moreover, the fight against homophobia has been formally included into the foreign policies of numerous countries of the Global North. Homophobia is now solidly a part of global queer politics.

Yet, homophobia as a concept has acquired an almost depoliticized veneer, as it has simply come to be understood in international discussions as hatred and violence against homosexuals. In many cases, and over centuries, the deployment of anti-homosexual violence by regimes has been, nevertheless, inherently political: it has selectively been used by state actors in the pursuit of particular political agendas.

As editors of the Global Queer Politics book series, we are very pleased to present Fernando Serrano-Amaya's *Homophobic Violence in Armed Conflict and Political Transition*, a critical analysis of state-sponsored violence against homosexuals in armed conflicts and political transitions.

As Serrano-Amaya suggests, the concept of homophobia has been developed in non-conflict settings and in direct relationship to discussions over identity politics. In his fascinating study, which looks at the cases of Colombia and South Africa, Serrano-Amaya deconstructs binary understandings of homophobic violence and argues that it contributes to the creation of inclusions, exclusions and hierarchies that constitute the dynamics of political conflicts. Building on scholarship that has looked at the intersection of gender and political conflict, he brings back the political to discussions of homophobia, challenging current conceptualizations that see it as a unified and singular political phenomenon.

Using research evidence from ethnographies, *Homophobic Violence in Armed Conflict and Political Transition* explores anti-homosexual violence as experienced by victims in both countries. The reconstruction of the memories of events that caused suffering in the affected individuals and communities demonstrates that these are not simply facts, but, rather, that the use of homophobia in political transitions, such as the one that happened in South Africa, creates a new configuration of events which in turn contributes to the emergence of political subjects. In the case of Colombia, Serrano-Amaya's analysis suggests that homophobic violence has been used by the state as a means of control of specific populations, but it also shows that it has not been a fixed pattern: it has varied according to particular political junctures. In the case of South Africa, his analysis suggests that this type of violence was intrinsically connected to apartheid, yet it was perpetrated by the regime in a selective and rationalized way to fit the interests of a system that reinforced militarised masculinities in a militarised society.

The reconstruction of experiences of homophobia among victims in these two contexts raises several research challenges and has important implications for someone who has been involved in both academia and activism. The author's engagement of these issues captures rather well the debates that we present in Global Queer Politics, a series that has as one of its main objectives, furthering a conversation between academia and activism. We are delighted to include this very fine piece of work in the series.

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Jordi Díez
Sonia Corrêa
David Paternotte
Matthew Waites

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PREFACE

If you think you understand sexual politics, read this remarkable book, and think again. You are likely to see the embodiment, power, violence and survival in new ways. You may even have a new understanding of truth.

This is a book with important intellectual messages, which also tells gripping stories based on adventurous research. Dr Serrano set out to explore sexual questions in two societies that have gone through massive social trauma in recent history: South Africa, through the violent racist apartheid regime and its collapse, and Colombia, through the peak of the longest-running armed civil conflict in the world. His initial plan was to understand the role of homophobic violence in these conflicts and in the transition to peace and nation building.

He has certainly done that, but he has done much more. Dr Serrano's research has opened up the whole terrain of sexual politics in the crucible of armed conflict and social transformation. This required him to create databases from the archives of violence, to collect intimate life stories from marginalised people and to rethink the state itself, not just as an agent in sexual politics, but as a product of sexual politics.

This kind of research is hard to do, for more than one reason. People on the social margins, many of whom have been targeted themselves, have little reason to trust researchers. The historical record about violence against them is fragmentary, often inaccessible, sometimes simply missing. And research on trauma is traumatic for the researcher too. I learned this during the early days of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Australia, when colleagues and friends were dying while researchers groped towards prevention strategies.

In the face of all this, Dr Serrano has brought off an engaged, ethical and powerfully illuminating programme of research. Himself an activist and educator in Colombia, he has an insider's understanding of the issues. But he has also taken great care to learn, understand and present to the reader a range of different experiences of sexual politics from the two countries. The "insider/outsider" formula is too simple for this. The approach involves a search for broad perspective *as part of* close engagement and sympathy.

By broad perspective, I mean really broad. This book centres on the two national cases of South Africa and Colombia, but those are not all it concerns. Dr Serrano has also looked at these issues internationally, and draws on research about sexual politics and modern conflict from across the world. The lessons he draws are relevant far beyond his two main cases. *Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur*. With the name changed, the story applies to you.

One of the great strengths of this book is its grounding in specific life stories. Dr Serrano conducted 56 detailed interviews with people involved in these events in the two countries. He then spent a long time analysing the interviews, writing a series of close-focus case studies before attempting an overall interpretation. This is a very intensive research method, requiring patience as well as insight. But the method can be exceptionally rewarding, and this research shows it.

A number of these accounts are threaded through the pages of this book: the stories of Zoraya, Lena, Carolina and Jorge, Misa, Funeka, Nadia, Sheila and Baliswe, and shorter parts of other stories. I won't try to summarise any of them here, they need to be read direct. If the reader wants a quick introduction, try the first and the last: Zoraya's story of a *chicatrans* from Colombia in Chap. 3 and Baliswe's survivor/activist story from South Africa in Chap. 7.

Though these are fascinating tales in themselves, Dr Serrano is doing more than telling stories. He has thought about the form of the story, and the way life narratives are crafted under the pressures of social power.

This issue has been raised in the global-North literature about trans-sexual women's life stories, but in a static way, presuming there's a social template they all follow. Dr Serrano goes beyond this to show how life stories are crafted in changing power contexts, as multiple social actors—some of them carrying guns—try to shape the social world. The crafting is far from a passive process. Indeed, Dr Serrano finally sees the life narratives as a form of subaltern agency. They are among the ways in which marginalised people claim the power of interpretation for themselves and claim a place in the world.

Interpretation and meaning matter; but this is not a post-structuralist story about identities, norms and discourses. The life stories themselves tell us that. This is tougher stuff altogether. The stories involve gang rapes, murders, public executions, death threats, forced exile and dispossession, prison and the intimidation of whole communities by armed forces.

The armed forces involved are not just the usual suspects on the political right. Doubtless the right-wing forces, that is, the army, police and paramilitaries, have accounted for more deaths than their opponents in both South Africa and Colombia. Yet insurgent forces, in these countries and others (e.g. Peru, with *Sendero Luminoso, Shining Path*), have also been involved in intimidation, rape and murder. Dr Serrano is alert to the importance of class and race inequalities, but doesn't play a blame game. It is the socially pervasive violence of the conflict itself, creating a world of insecurity and fear that is centrally at issue here.

That understanding leads Dr Serrano to a sustained rethinking of familiar concepts in social and sexual analysis. A whole series of them, in fact: homophobia, the state, violence, subjectivity, agency and intersectionality. I will focus on the first two.

The idea of "homophobia" is the starting point of the project, but not the end point. Particularly in Chap. 5, but in fact through the whole book, Dr Serrano subjects this idea to sustained scrutiny and critique. Its early form, as a psychological concept identifying a neurotic fear of homosexuals, is plainly inadequate to the larger scale of sexual politics.

Yet, the later attempts to define "political homophobia" as a strategy used by political forces to threaten opponents and mobilise support are also problematic. Dr Serrano examines the fine detail of campaigns of intimidation, and shows that the targeting of homosexuals is not distinct from the targeting of other vulnerable groups. Further, their vulnerability is not just a matter of sexual or gender hierarchy but is connected to poverty, unemployment, racism, displacement and other processes that go back to the colonial legacy. There is, as he puts it, "a conglomerate of violences," rather than a single dimension of hierarchy and marginalisation.

In the same way, the concept of the state comes under scrutiny. In commonsense terms, the state is an obvious fact—we can see it, in the political leadership, the army, the bureaucracy, the laws. But how far does the state extend in fact? How do we understand its boundaries when some of its functions are exercised by local elites; or by irregular armed forces allied to those local elites; or, even more dramatically, by insurgent armed forces?

Dr Serrano shows that these are not hypothetical cases, but are realities on the ground. Both paramilitary forces and guerrillas seek to act like the

state, to rule territory, and in doing that, to exercise control over local communities. They make and enforce laws, deal out rewards and punishments, and they apply those powers, among other things, to gender relations and sexuality. What the Canadian feminist sociologist Dorothy Smith called "the relations of ruling" are here constructed and reconstructed locally, through violence, in unpredictable sequences. The state is not a given, it is constantly in question, under challenge, in the process of being made.

A lot of what we take for granted in social science assumes order and regularity, assumes that everyone obeys the rules and that everyone peaceably drives on the right side of the road. Suddenly in this book, we are considering situations where we cannot make those assumptions at all—and where, of course, most people don't have cars to drive. Read on, therefore, for significant challenges to much of conventional social science!

Dr Serrano not only develops important criticisms of existing concepts, he is also generating new concepts or new ways of using existing terms. For instance, Chap. 3 introduces the term *parapolitica*, para-politics. This word was invented in Colombia to name the political process that has developed around the connections between paramilitary forces and both local and national political actors. Dr Serrano develops from this the concept of "sexual para-politics," referring to the policies imposed by armed groups to regulate the lives of women and men in areas (perhaps temporarily) under their control.

This is, I think, a useful way of thinking about the politics of sexuality in other circumstances where local violence is deployed to enforce gender and sexual privilege. The group violence against lesbian women, mis-called "corrective rape" in South Africa, is a case in point. I also think this offers a useful way to think about domestic violence in settings where violent husbands, believing (sometimes correctly) that they have community support, set out to coerce wives and children.

In Dr Serrano's treatment, the idea of sexual para-politics becomes part of an important rethinking of violence. We are familiar now with the idea that violence is not just reactive, but is also productive. It has a downstream, it has effects. This is an important theme in criminological discussions of the fact that most crime is enacted by men. Crime, including violent crime, is not an expression of existing masculinity so much as an attempt to achieve masculinity, or a desired version of masculinity.

Dr Serrano goes a level beyond this. He shows the productivity of violence in constructing a whole sexual and gender order. That includes desired versions of masculinity, but also proper places for women, and places of abjection or expulsion for subjects like *travestis*, homosexual men and lesbians. Such a gender order is not just the tidy arrangement of "sex roles," familiar in the older literature on gender, or the heteronormativity of more recent theory. It includes those matters, but goes beyond them: it involves economic arrangements concerning livelihood, privilege and poverty. And it goes beyond those matters too: for such a gender order is also a regime of life and death. There is, as Achille Mbembe put it, a necropolitics here.

Yet this productivity, while far-reaching, is neither uniform nor continuous. It is uneven, complex and operates in changing contexts. In Chap. 5, Dr Serrano uses the adjective *chiaroscuro* for the "spaces created by the interactions between socio-political violence, gender and sexuality," and I think that is apt. It is a term from art history, naming the interplay of light and dark in Renaissance paintings that created their sense of form and drama. The real-life productivity of the conglomerate of social violence comes out of a ragged, shifting background, lit by lightning flashes and rarely settling into a single pattern.

One can understand, therefore, why the orderly concepts of conventional social science are in question. They have an imperfect grip on social conditions where, as the South African feminist Jane Bennett once put it, "relative chaos, gross economic disparities, displacement, uncertainty and surprise" are the *norm*, not the exception. It is difficult to offer generalisations across the *chiaroscuro*, to state simple and general truths—however much we yearn for them.

In Chap. 6, Dr Serrano comes to a sustained reflection on truths. That's an issue that emerged in the peacemaking process itself, as shown by South Africa's famous Truth and Reconciliation Commission—much admired, and sometimes imitated, in other countries.

But truths have an uncertain politics, even where an institutional form for their expression exists. As this book shows, it was not easy for questions of sexual para-politics to get heard in the TRC. That was not just because of the Commission's own priorities. Activists had to make their own judgements of what to pursue, what to reveal, what to place on record. In both South Africa and Colombia, the international language of "human rights" arrived in the peacemaking process, bringing a powerful framework for representing oppression or exclusion—but one that did not necessarily match local events.

An official un-knowing about sexual politics, and semi-official languages such as human rights discourse, therefore co-exist with truths that come out of personal experiences and local situations. Dr Serrano speaks at one point of the "micro-truths" that exist outside the formal languages of power. It is an idea to ponder.

Where does this leave social science? The study certainly points away from the mechanical, positivist model of social science that was powerfully criticised half a century ago, but seems to be making a comeback now. Dr Serrano has given us an important and thought-provoking study, largely because he is *not* trying for an abstracted, ahistorical model of sexuality, violence and political transition. As he emphasises in Chap. 7, he sees these matters in their historicity: located in place and time, processes of becoming. He is able to see creation and transformation in individual lives; in local gender and sexual orders; in the making and remaking of states; and even, I think, in the international order.

Social science is itself strongly affected by the global economic and political order. Social-scientific theories and methods have largely been constructed in the global North, the centre/metropole both for the old empires and the new neoliberal economy and communications system. Dr Serrano is well informed about the social and cultural sciences of the metropole, and makes effective use of them from time to time. But he is not captive to them. This highly original study of sexual and gender politics in two countries of the global South shows forcefully how another social science is possible.

And how it might contribute to another possible world! I remarked earlier that this is engaged social science. Its author has been active in struggles for peace, justice and reconciliation. The kind of knowledge this book produces is not a slick formula for a solution, but much deeper understanding of what is involved—what the experiences have been, what strategies have been followed, what accommodations have been made and what intransigent realities remain. Tough stuff, indeed; but the kind of knowledge we desperately need for action in the real world.

Sydney   Raewyn Connell
1 May 2017

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First, special acknowledgement to the women and men in South Africa and Colombia who shared their life experiences. Because of them this research was possible. I hope this book pays due respect to them and their stories.

My most sincere thanks to Raewyn Connell, my PhD supervisor. Her wisdom and unique style of supervision made my PhD not just an academic experience but a process of personal growth. Her support has continued after I graduated. It has been an honour being one of her students.

Dennis Altman, Mario Pecheny and Mark Hunter, the external examiners of my PhD thesis, offered challenging ideas and valuable references. I tried to incorporate some of them in this book. Others may need to wait for further pieces of work.

CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
APO	African People Organisation
AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging—Afrikaner Resistance Movement
BACRIM	Bandas Criminales Emergentes
BiH	Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina
CCB	Civil Cooperation Bureau
CIJP	Comisión Intercongregacional de Justicia y Paz
CINEP	Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular
CSVR	Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
CVR	Comisión de la Verdad y la Reconciliación
ECHR	European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
ELN	Ejercito de Liberación Nacional
FARC EP	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia Ejercito del Pueblo
GASA	Gay Association of South Africa
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
ILGA	International Gay and Lesbian Organisation
LAGO	Lesbians and Gays against Oppression
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
LIGMA	Lesbian and Gay Men Action Zagreb
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
MOLH	Movimiento de Liberación Homosexual de Lima
MRTA	Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru

NCGLE	National Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Equality
NP	National Party
NUSAS	National Association of South African Students
OLGA	Organisation of Lesbian and *Gay* Activists
PAGAD	People against Gangsterism and Drugs
PCP-SL	Partido Comunista del Peru Sendero Luminoso
POWA	People Opposing Women Abuse
SADF	South African Defence Forces
SAP	South African Police
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organization
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Introduction

This book explores the interactions between armed conflict, gender and sexualities in times of social suffering, caused by violent political transitions to democracy. It documents how those interactions occur in particular contexts and the concepts created to explain them. In particular, the book focuses on the concept of "political homophobia" and the ways in which it has been constructed.

The book is located in a critical political context. State-sponsored discrimination against individuals and collectives, because of their sexual orientation and gender identities, has occurred for decades in different parts of the world. If homophobia was once defined as the fear of homosexuality, increasingly homophobia has become the use of homosexuality to produce fear for political purposes.

Such uses are now more recognised in the international arena as matters of concern. The documentation of homophobic violence in armed conflicts and politics is a priority for activism and the advancement of human rights. However, with mobilisations and recognition, new dichotomies between countries have appeared. Gay rights are now included in the agendas for post-conflict reconstruction.

This book discusses both the long-term invisibility of homophobic violence in the analysis of armed conflicts and the effects of the strategies used to render visible what was not seen before. In order do to that, the book connects the studies of gender and sexualities with the studies of political

conflict and conflict resolution, using case studies from South Africa and Colombia. Although, advanced production of knowledge on the topic has been done in both of these areas of knowledge, such analyses have occurred in isolation from each other.

An important exception is feminist scholarship on gender and sexual violence in wars. Feminist researchers and activists have brought gender and sexuality to the centre of analysis of armed conflicts and political transitions. Their analyses are still marginalised from mainstream literature on international relations, conflict resolution and transitional justice.

The reason for selecting the two countries, South Africa and Colombia, for this analysis was not to make a formal comparison. Instead, their diversity was seen as essential in order to achieve knowledge from their particular histories. Both countries have experienced severe conflicts and sincere attempts at reconciliation. In each case, excessive violence has become normalised and incorporated into everyday life—but it has also been resisted and transformed.

In the case of Colombia, issues of gender and sexuality have been at the core of recent attempts for non-violent conflict resolution of one of the oldest armed conflicts in Latin America. Sexism and homophobia were pivotal in social mobilisations against a peace agreement between the Colombian government and Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia Ejercito del Pueblo (FARC EP), the main guerrilla movement, in 2016. The inclusion of a gender perspective in the peace agreement was seen by the opposition as expression of some *ideologia de género* (gender ideology) intended to erase gender differences, destroy the family and promote homosexuality in schools.

In the case of South Africa, the legacies of apartheid and the rights of its victims are still topics of constant debate. With the transition to democracy, new forms of gender and sexual violence appeared. South Africa was one of the first countries to implement protective legal measures for sexual orientation as a result of the transition to democracy. South Africa has been a point of reference for knowledge about reconciliation. Colombia has learnt from several international experiences of peace building, and is developing its own knowledge on the topic. Due to the implementation of transitional justice instruments in Colombia, there is a legal and political interest in documenting cases of homophobic violence and in the restitution of rights to their victims. Putting both cases together is also a way to contribute to those dialogues.

This book aims to produce knowledge that contributes to theory building and processes of advocacy. It provides new information, and offers a

systematic analysis useful for NGOs and state institutions. The analysis that will be presented later has a particular focus on forms of activism, political organisation and social policies. That not only adds a fresh perspective to a topic usually approached via the denunciation of human rights abuses on individuals, but also becomes of benefit to grassroots organisations, practitioners and policy makers.

Methodologically, this book analyses problems of documentation, memory and case construction that are of relevance in the field of human rights and gender in post-conflict reconstruction. The methodology used, comparing in-depth case studies and combining archival research with interviews and fieldwork, offers an alternative for a topic often discussed from within one discipline, or within the context of a single country. The methodology will be of interest to practitioners looking to gather evidence on human rights abuses and to those writing reports on gender and sexual violence for policy activism.

Data for the in-depth case studies was mainly gathered through research in archives and databases, and through the personal narratives of participants who had experiences involving violence. Both methods of data collection required travelling to the respective countries. Fieldwork was conducted between October 2012 and May 2013. Travelling provided the opportunity to engage in many informal conversations and to witness events related to the particular histories and cultural contexts of both countries.

The book starts with a discussion of the ways anti-homosexual violence and political homophobia are normally conceptualised. This discussion leads not only to theoretical but also to ethical questions. Both are discussed in the same chapter to stress their interconnection, as part of an account on the politics of knowledge.

Chapters 3 and 4 present the case studies separated by country. Chapter 3 argues that anti-homosexual violence in Colombia contributes to the creation of an authoritarian and hierarchical gender and sexual order through the selective use of violence. Throughout the social conflict in Colombia, armed groups have imposed gender and sexual policies to control the lives of women and men in the areas in dispute. This kind of politics centres on socio-political violence that originated in the past and is reorganised under new economic and political projects. It has transformed itself over time, and has changed the daily lives of communities in both war and non-war zones. The case studies illustrate how gender and sexual violence are not a collateral damage from the conflict, but are at its core. The chapter

develops a concept of "sexual para-politics," to emphasise that the violence and its effects result from parallel systems of governance in dispute. These sexual para-politics continuously target *travestis* and impoverished homosexuals in contexts of socio-economic marginalisation.

Chapter 4 shows how sexuality, anti-homosexual violence and the apartheid regime were intrinsically connected in South Africa. Criminalisation of homosexuality was a key element of the sexual policies enforced by the apartheid regime. In a regime that was patriarchal, militaristic and based on rigid gender and sexual orders, it was impossible to leave homophobia out of the analysis. Apartheid deployed homophobia selectively, rationalised it to fit its interests, regulating sexualities and creating racialised positions of privilege and hierarchy, as well as the space for deviance. The chapter introduces a discussion of the concept of political homophobia, showing its limits for explaining women's experiences of violence.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 present different theoretical approaches to the topic of the book. Chapter 5 offers a framework for the analysis of anti-homosexual violence through the discussion of existing literature. It argues that current conceptualisations have been developed in a no-war context and with a direct relation to identity politics. The concept of "political homophobia" has been pivotal in connecting homophobia with political transitions and conflicts. There are, however, problems in the concept, especially its assumptions about purpose. Political homophobia is also a limited concept in understanding women's experiences of gender and sexual violence.

Chapter 6 explores how homophobia is incorporated into mechanisms of truth telling and memory that characterise political transitions. State-sponsored mechanisms for truth-telling and activist memory work have been pivotal for documenting, denouncing and claiming justice for victims of homophobic violence. They also provide frameworks for what can and cannot be narrated. Other forms of truth-telling tend to be ignored or rendered invisible with such mechanisms. The chapter argues that the discussion regarding social change and justice in political transitions needs to go beyond legal changes and the granting of rights to individuals and groups defined by "sexual orientation" or "gender identity."

Chapter 7 brings together the main arguments of the book. It calls for understanding political homophobia as a gendered strategy, in particular in its connection with the hegemonic masculinity that produces and reproduces wars and conflicts. Yet, such focus needs to be reviewed. From the struggles for dignity led by individuals and groups, the discussion moves

away from the need to produce evidence and explanations to how violence becomes a subjective experience as well as reasons for collective articulation. From that shift, the quest for understanding violence moves from its normalisation as object of study to a reason for collective actions against injustice. The chapter also calls for approaches that take into account the interactions between violence, sexuality and armed conflicts in their historicity, instead of viewing them as isolated objects of study and intervention. In that way, the analytical and political value of these discussions remains relevant for social change.

The book finishes with an appendix that describes the techniques used for data collection and data analysis, as well as the methodological problems faced in this kind of research.

With the location of the topic of the book in the field of sexual politics, I hope to facilitate navigating through descriptions of events of violence and the analysis of political strategies. The question for the destructive and productive power of anti-homosexual violence will be a connecting thread throughout the book. That double power of violence will be used for the analysis of political homophobia in the reinforcement of old, and the emergence of new gender and sexual orders.

Sex, Violence and Politics: The Research Problem

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the reader to the politics of homophobia, and to the approach taken in the research for this book. There are international debates on these problems, and the first task is to locate this study in a global context. The second section considers the way we think about violence, and the problematic dominance of abstract, generalised concepts of violence. Doing research on violence in political conflicts, and reconstructing events that caused suffering, raises serious problems of ethics and these are discussed in the third section. Theoretical questions and ethical questions are connected; presenting them together in this chapter starts a discussion of the politics of knowledge and the political uses of knowledge, which will be continued later in the book.

The final section of the chapter explains the terminology used. Details of the methodological issues faced in this research, and the solutions adopted, are given in the Appendix.

A RELEVANT ISSUE

In recent years, the political uses of homophobia have been on the front pages of international news. From Africa to Latin America, from Russia to the United States, homophobia is at the centre of political debates. With much reason, some describe this situation as a "worldwide spread of

homophobia." For representatives of international human rights organisations, homophobia is part of the moral panic caused by states in crisis. A new category of social and political subjects, " LGBT people," are being targeted as the scapegoats of such crises.

This situation has not gone unnoticed. Advocates in different parts of the world have raised concerns on the issue and have called for international action. Extensive networks of activism and collective actions for challenging homophobia have been created. Even more, they have called the attention of some governments and international agencies. In December 2011, the United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton gave a speech in the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva declaring that the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people were also human rights.

Supportive governments have reacted not only with declarations, but also with restrictive measures. International aid has been used to put pressure on "homophobic states," as enforced by Cameron's government in the United Kingdom in 2014. This strategy both strengthens international calls for action and awakes memories of colonial interventions.

Concerns about global homophobia have also reached mainstream media. Documentaries show the difficulties of being gay in disparate places such as Brazil, India or Russia (Fry 2013). Maps of "global gay rights" circulate broadly (ILGA 2014), creating landscapes of the "gay friendly" places for tourism or the "worst places to be gay in." Social media call for solidarity with LGBT communities in those countries.

"Homophobia" and "gay rights" have become a way to create new geographies of "barbarism" versus "civilisation," which measure modernities and define new exclusions. In Europe and the United States, gay rights and women's rights have been used to spread stereotypes against Muslim cultures and to exclude some humans from rights given to others (Fassin 2010). Under the war on terrorism led by the United States, orientalised terrorist bodies are produced in order to include some queer bodies into the bio-political productivity of the liberal nation-state (Puar 2007). In the fight against discrimination and in the name of inclusion, neoliberalism has created regimes of value that reproduce global orders and justify violence (Agathangelou 2010).

"LGBT rights," as a discrete entity, not only homogenises disparate life experiences, but also systems of oppression and reasons to struggle. The idea of rights in a concept like "transgender rights" is criticised for imposing a particular world view, specifically the United States style politics of

gender identity (Namaste 2012). Now that power and governance speak the language of rights, those who are unable to be assimilated are exposed to politics that decide when they are worthy of protection or not, when their suffering deserves to be taken into account or not, and how much of their diversity should count (Haritaworn et al. 2013).

Struggles for rights are still necessary. Globalised identity politics have facilitated the development of local activism and regional alliances to promote social justice, gender and sexual rights (Altman 2001; Petchesky 2005). Critiques of global identity politics often ignore their uses in local initiatives to obtain change. There is, therefore, a need for empirical studies that look at specific configurations of practice in particular political, social and cultural contexts.

When basic citizen rights are still a matter of struggle, legal reforms embody the results of accumulated efforts for social transformation. Social movements in Latin America have a long history of demanding rights as a strategy for collective action and for transforming the state. In contexts of conflict and in war zones, individuals and collectives use those languages and the spaces they provide as mechanisms to transform protracted injustices (Cameron 1993; Corrales 2015; Riles 2006). They also challenge them in their struggles for dignity.

These critiques show the problems created by simplistic dichotomies between the rule of law and lawlessness, inclusion or exclusion, recognition or invisibility, war or peace, global or local. The spaces between are where the actual processes of change take place.

Conceptual Displacements

The main research question of this book is the constructive and deconstructive character of anti-homosexual violence in armed conflicts and political transitions. Violence imposes suffering on particular bodies, groups and communities. Its power to destroy the social fabric needs little explanation. But violence also remakes the social, as will be expanded later.

This remaking has a gender and sexual dimension. Discussing the productive power of violence is not an endorsement of any kind of suffering nor an acceptance of human wrongs. It is a call to bring into account how the suffering imposed on some bodies produce gains for others. We need to explore why some forms of violence are used instead of others, how the effects of violence are distributed, and its unequal results.

Homophobia, or the set of hatreds and exclusions wrapped into that term, plays a fundamental role in the dispute for hegemony between political actors during political transitions. Instead of being an exceptional event or a side effect, it is at the core of the gender and sexual dimensions of political violence and armed conflicts. Researchers have already identified links between gender and sexual violence against women in nation-building processes (Das 1995, 2008; Yuval-Davis 1997), between hegemonic masculinities and nationalism (Connell 2000; Enloe 2008; Hinojosa 2010; Messerschmidt 2010), and between hegemonic masculinity and homophobia (Connell 1987; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Extending this approach, it is suggested here that homophobic violence contributes centrally to the creation of inclusions, exclusions and hierarchies that constitute the dynamics of political conflicts.

This research started with an interest in exploring homophobia in political transitions. Its purpose was to contribute to the documentation and analysis of such violence, focusing on lived experiences and their transformations. In developing this project, there have been several moments of fracture and displacement that gave a new shape to the research problem.

The first fracture involved the attempt to document homophobic violence as if it were pre-defined with a fixed conceptualisation. This led to an interest in the uses of homophobic violence in political transitions and armed conflicts. Looking at "uses" was beneficial; it widened the focus to political practices. But this risked focusing too much on intentions and rational purposes. Once these implications were considered, there was a third displacement, to an interest in what homophobic violence produces. This chapter will explain these shifts.

Conceptualisations of homophobia appeared problematic early on in this research. The definition of homophobia as an incapacitating fear (Weinberg 1972, p. 8) was based on the work on prejudice conducted by the social psychologist Gordon Allport (1954). Homophobia as an analytical concept was formed amid post-war concerns about prejudice and authoritarian personalities. However, the concept of homophobia, its development and alternative conceptualisations, have been shaped mainly in contexts of no-war, from psychosocial perspectives, and with less attention to the connections between anti-homosexual violence, armed conflicts and political transitions. This book aims to bring back the political to the discussions on homophobia, and what is political in this context will also be a matter of constant reflection throughout.

Critiques of the initial conceptualisation of homophobia have introduced the role of social structures and normative systems in prejudices against non-heterosexuality. With the concept of heterosexism, for example, the emphasis is on systems of oppression. The debate on heteronormativity uses a language of codes, norms and social orders based on gender and (hetero) sexuality. Heterosexism is a theory of causes. Heteronormativity is a theory of the functioning of regulatory systems.

Acknowledging that there has been a long-term discussion of the concept of homophobia is useful: it highlights how the concept has been expanded to include different issues of oppression and injustice. It has also called attention to the problems created when assuming that homophobia or anti-homosexual violence is a unified and singular phenomenon. An interest in framing the discussion in terms of continua and interactions is found in the work of sociologist and criminologist Stephen Tomsen (2009). In his analysis of anti-homosexual violence in Australia, Tomsen identifies a variety of events that act at the same time. "Gay bashing," "homosexual panic," anti-homosexual killings, or hate crimes are related situations of sexual prejudice, but are not examples of the same event of "homophobia." What is seen as "hatred"—from the perspective of crimes motivated by hate—can be a constitutive part of hegemonic masculinity, or the policing of gender identity (Tomsen 2009, pp. 79–82). For this research, Tomsen's situated analysis implies that the practices of violence bundled under the concept of homophobia can be deployed differently in the course of conflicts to serve different functions and produce different effects for the actors involved.

The interest in documenting homophobic violence in contexts of armed conflict and political transitions required a deeper discussion of how to describe events and make connections. Not only was it relevant to review the concept of homophobia for this research, it was also important to consider how to document violence in political transitions and armed conflicts.

Viewing certain events as examples of anti-homosexual violence assumed some pre-existence of violence as a differentiated experience. The anthropology of violence has shown that violence is not a self-evident experience, but its record depends on complex processes of narration, representation and subjectivity (Kleinman et al. 1997). There are gaps between the ways in which violence is experienced, as well as how it is understood and translated into theory, as Mo Hume (2009, p. 110) concludes from her feminist-inspired research on gendered violence in El Salvador. Events

studied in this project are not just a collection of facts; they are experiences for the emergence of subjects.

Keeping in mind that violence is also a subjective experience, one of the challenges in this research was how to understand lived experiences of particular individuals and collectives without reducing them to determinisms, voluntarisms or subordinated positions. In other words, this research has an interest in showing how homophobic violence impacts upon the lives of real human beings, without reducing them to the position of victims. Here, guidance was found in other researchers' explorations of what is produced by homophobic violence and sexual prejudice. Gail Mason (2002), for example, argues that violence is both a site of subjugation and a site of formation. For her, violence constitutes subordinated sexual subject positions, such as lesbians or gays. What violence cannot do is dictate how the ones in those positions inhabit and resist them. With that in mind, she gives space to individual agency and considers creativity in the interaction with structures of oppression.

Perspectives such as Mason's still use a language of norms and regulation, that tends to reduce subjects to disciplined populations and their agency to resistance—as if resistance were the only option. Lois McNay (2000) argues that the emphasis on subjectification in current analysis of gender, derived from Foucault and Lacan, overemphasises constraints and looks at agency only in terms of resistance or dislocation of norms. McNay argues instead for a "generative theoretical framework," which would allow understanding of the "creative and imaginative substrate to action." That was one of the sources of the notion of "struggles for dignity," which will be developed in further chapters of this book.

The tendency to describe violence immediately as based on sexual orientation or gender identity is also questionable. K.M. Franke (2007) argues that legal and social classifications of certain behaviours as sexual sometimes says too much or too little about the suffering imposed on victims, and may diminish other aspects of violence. In this case, locating the violence suffered by transsexual women and transgender persons in exactly the same terms as the violence affecting self-identified gay men overemphasises sexuality and ignores the importance of the social structures of injustice. Just saying that some events of violence are related to sexual orientation and others to gender identity is not enough to explain different uses and different results.

Furthermore, there is a risk that in documenting some events under the idea of "homophobic violence," such events become normalised, because

of their isolation from other dimensions of political transitions and armed conflicts. The risk of normalising violence when making it a matter of academic discussion and policy has been raised in discussions around gender and violence, for example, when dealing with violence against women (Haug 1987) or when using violence as a connection between gender and sexuality (Bennett 2010). The work of Jane Bennett (2010), Tamara Shefer and Kopano Ratele (2011) showed that the connections between gender, sexuality and violence are not automatic. They are constituted in relation to social structures that also produce vulnerabilities, marginalities, exploitation and oppression. In this project, these points demand a constant reconsideration of ideas such as "violence because of sexual orientation or gender identity" or "sexual orientation-based violence."

Instead of coining a new term or looking for an alternative theory for homophobia, the project moved towards rethinking the role of violence in gender and sexual orders. Even if homophobia is under permanent debate, it is still a relevant term. But we need to examine the ways in which violent events are packed into comprehensive categories, whatever they are. This approach implies a critique of standardised transhistorical or transnational legal constructions of anti-homosexual violence. Instead of looking for a connection between two distinct forms of violence (anti-homosexual violence and political armed violence), it was more productive to consider their uses and mutual constitution. More than a connection between two separate things, the uses of homophobia in political transitions involve a crisscross of violence that creates something new, a new configuration of events. This is a process that implies not only the creation of hierarchies and exclusions, but also the production of gains and losses, negative and positive results for some subjects and not for others.

The interest in the uses of violence in this research came from diverse theoretical fields, though they have feminist perspectives in common. Research about violence in South Africa or Colombia suggests that violence is not only a result of the injustice of social structures. Violence can be also a social structure that patterns interactions and institutions—an idea that can be applied to other post-colonial contexts (Comaroff and Comaroff 2007; Múnera 2008).

The anthropology of violence, articulated by Veena Das (1995, 2000, 2008; Kleinman et al. 1997), showed the need to explore the way in which suffering is imposed on particular bodies and communities, and their consequent struggles for dignity. From that perspective, violence not only unmakes the social world but also helps remake it.

Veena Das argues that the process of belonging and of giving life to the nation-state is a violent process that not only unmakes the social order but also remakes it (2008, pp. 284–293). This process is both gendered and sexualised. She uses the image of abducted women during the partition of India to make visible the pathology of the sexualisation of the social contract in times of disorder (2008, p. 290). Sexual and reproductive violence, though they can vary in form, uses or intensity, are methods of annihilation of the other as a collective (Das 2008, p. 291). If violence remakes and constitutes the social and gender order, violence has a constructive character. In the gendering of the state and the state sanctioning of the gender order, violence is foundational. Violence as an enabling condition for vulnerabilities to be revealed also makes gendered subjectivities legible.

The concept of "sexualisation," from the perspective of the Hamburg Socialist Women's Association (Haug 1987), helped shift interest from describing processes of violence to understanding what they produce. The idea of sexualisation as a simultaneous process of reduction, concentration and (for women) subjection of bodies suggested the need to explore the uses of homophobia not as mere instrumental actions but as mechanisms of construction, destruction and reconstruction of social power relations through violence.

The sociology of gender provided by Raewyn Connell (1987, 2005, 2009, 2011) facilitated the understanding of how social structures are gendered and sexualised. In terms of this research, this perspective implies an examination of the gendered and sexualised outcomes of political transitions. Connell argues that violence is "constitutive" of the gender order, as in the cases of dictatorship regimes constructed through violent military masculinity, and constructing authoritative fatherhood and subordinated motherhood (Connell 2012, p. 9).

The main theoretical discussion in this book will be around recent scholarship on political homophobia. Explored initially as an exceptional event contributing to broader nationalistic purposes (Boellstorff 2004), political homophobia was examined later as a political strategy with its own characteristics and intentions (Currier 2010). Recently, it has been considered a distinctive trend in global politics (Bosia and Weiss 2013). While taking shape as an analytical tool, the idea of political homophobia has involved some issues that are still under debate. They include the purposiveness, uses and reasons that make those expressions of homophobia "political." If the idea of global homophobia is not to lead back to the discredited idea that homosexuality is a uniform experience across the

world, then what is "global" or "political" in the terms needs to be further discussed. This book will contribute to those debates.

Finally, some words on the concept of political transitions. The history, uses and contestations of this concept would require another research project. It is an idea used extensively to describe changes from one political system to another—often, the difficult movement from political turmoil to democratisation. When armed conflicts and political crisis have weakened the state, political transitions tend to be associated with the strengthening of the state and the development of institutions. Transitional justice, conflict resolution and peace building are the mechanisms that facilitate such transitions.

However, reading political transitions as merely a descriptive term or as the automatic result of the deployment of certain mechanisms renders the concept uncritical. What changes and what remains the same in political transitions, what forces facilitate some changes and impede others, needs to be explored carefully.

Feminist researchers have argued that the transition from war to peace does not necessarily means less violence against women or less gender violence. In fact, what women may experience in political transitions is actually a "continuum of violence" (Moser and Clarck 2001). Feminist scholarship has also shown that the rhythm of changes in political transitions is not synchronised. What may change fast as result of a peace negotiation may remain slow as a result of battles around culture and tradition. In other words, the transition from one form of government to another to solve conflicts does not mean changes in all conflicts—at least not in gender conflicts.

These contradictory paths for change will be a leading concept all throughout this book. Sometimes such contradictions imply the transition from one form of violence to another. Contradictions can be also opportunities for the development of spaces for change that were not possible before political transitions (Barbarin et al. 1998; Friedman 1998; Noonan 1997; Waylen 2010). Political transitions can be also the ground in which gender and sexual orders and regimes change (Swarr 2012).

On Ethics and Positionality

In this research methodology, theory critique, ethics and politics of knowledge have been intimately linked. Talking about violence in political conflicts and reconstructing the memories of events that caused suffering

in the affected individuals and communities, produce significant methodological, ethical and political challenges. In terms of methodologies, these challenges imply not only the reconstruction of events from different points of view, but also the understanding of how violence impacts everyday life and the identities and life experiences of collectives and individuals. They also imply questioning the place of researchers as witnesses with the power to write about violence and the suffering of others.

In terms of the ethics of research, approaching violence implies the consideration of the reasons for calling attention to some events and remaining silent about others. Describing experiences of victimisation that affect certain groups can be useful for advocacy, but it can also accentuate representations of vulnerability. The creation of memories based on violent events can contribute to the empowerment of victims. But it can also contribute to their disempowerment when they are defined only as victims. Making certain events visible can be useful for activists' agendas, but it can also create undesirable visibilities with different political implications.

The African feminist theorist Ashley Currier (2011) elaborates the concept of representational ethics, referring to the permanent interrogation of the implications of representations and interpretations done in qualitative research. The term expressed several principles that Currier applied in her fieldwork in order to protect her participants and the organisations that facilitated her presence. In my research it has been fundamental to revise the implication of representing others mainly in reference to violence and as victims. It means not only the application of some ethical principles at the moment of research design, but a permanent reflexivity all through the research process. In qualitative research, this tension is usually solved with personal confessions or expressions of solidarity. Assuming contradictions and putting them on the table seems a more realistic option.

Though I will be mostly narrating this document in the third person, confronting the ethical issues involved requires me to talk in the first person.

There is extensive debate in the social sciences on the production of knowledge for critique and to support political struggles. Some have called themselves "activist scholars" (Lempert 2001), in order to stress the practical and political use of the knowledge they produce. In that idea, there is an assumption that distance between activism and scholarship can be reduced or even that one can be merged into the other. Narratives are used to blend voices and create a sense of common purposes in the writing. Writing "with" or "for" contributes to that collective project. Instead

of trying to build bridges or create connections, I have assumed the conflictive nature of such a situation. Activism and scholarship does not always need to be in parallel. Shifting and a constant negotiation of positions has been my response.

The topic of this research results not only from academic interest but also from personal involvement. In Colombia, I have participated in activist and advocacy initiatives for the protection of the rights of gays, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people since the mid-1990s. I have also had responsibilities as a consultant for state agencies in the design and implementation of social policies. Sometimes I have written with activists and grassroots organisations, and sometimes I have written for state agencies and academia. Current trends in the job markets shift me back and forth between different modes of knowledge production. Translating knowledges has been not only a matter of interest, but also a professional requirement for me.

This situation has affected my fieldwork in Colombia in several ways. While it facilitated dialogue with some activists and advocates at the regional level, it also raised questions among others about the uses of the information collected or my alignment within current activism politics. Because some participants knew my academic and activist work in the field, some interviews transformed themselves into a kind of dialogue in which I was also questioned. Those questions related to academic knowledge on the topic and not to my personal experiences.

During fieldwork, I was asked to participate in events organised by local organisations, to give comments on drafts of projects and to facilitate meetings between activists and public institutions. The fact that I was doing my PhD research in an international university facilitated access to some spaces, such as governmental institutions. This situation resulted from some perception of neutrality or externality in relation to the Colombian context. This was a double-edged sword, since it also meant that some participants constrained their narratives for the same reasons.

In fieldwork conducted in the Colombian Caribbean region, the topic of the research raised questions from several participants about my sexual orientation. The way participants perceived my sexual orientation affected the data collection process in at least three ways. In one way, when I was perceived as a gay man, activists acted in a kind of alliance with me, sharing information as with a peer. In another, participants who did not know whether I was a member of the *comunidad LGBT* (LGBT community),

but assumed that I was, interacted with me as a kind of advocate for the rights of such persons. That was evident in the conversation with some public employees working on the protection of human rights, who considered my research a contribution to advocacy.

In the third way, other participants positioned me as a researcher interested in the region. This perception of me as an outsider could have been facilitated by the fact that I was also perceived as someone born in the capital region and doing studies in a foreign country. However, in Colombia, a long history of internal colonialism, the application of centralist policies and the presence of important cultural differences have created significant distances between regions. There I was perceived as a *cachaco*, a term given to people born in the Andean lands and used to establish distances, differences and hierarchies among Colombians. There was no neutrality in such a condition as an outsider.

I am not South African and was in the country only once before the fieldwork for this research. Before collecting information in South Africa, I was aware of the criticism raised by South African activists about the use and exploitation of their stories for research purposes. Because of the limitations of my fieldwork trip and the context of the research, I was not able to create a more reciprocal relationship with participants. In the early days in Cape Town, I was also informed of discussions among lesbian activists about the effects of foreign representations of the violence they have been facing on their activism. What I experienced as the usual problems of creating rapport in the fieldwork may also have been a resistance to the use of South Africa as a laboratory for doctoral students or, even more, a critique of the co-optation of social struggles for academic purposes.

English is not my mother tongue nor do I speak other South African languages. This affected my fluency in the interviews. I was more restricted to the interview protocol designed previously. I had fewer options to reframe questions and to develop a more dialogical approach to the interviews. Likewise, the same condition sometimes reoriented the interviews to the point where I was the one being asked about related topics in my home country and to provide interpretations about the topics I was exploring. Those who kindly shared their time with me in South Africa were also curious and interested in Colombia.

In a way, while doing research in the South African context, I had to construct a subject position for me and my research, whereas in the case of Colombia I needed to deconstruct some of the positions I had before,

and construct new ones. In my case, being an outsider or insider were not fixed or static positions but fluid, permeable and ever-shifting social locations, as Nancy Naples has argued (1997).

Finally, there are implications for the researcher in doing research on experiences of social suffering, violence and victimisation, which affect both methods and analysis. Despite the fact that description of direct experiences of victimisation was not part of the research protocol, some participants shared painful and dramatic events, breaking the separation between internality and externality that was implicit in the research design. Not including those narratives would have conflicted with their desire to share those testimonies with others. At the same time, even though I have had long-term training as ethnographer, I sometimes found myself struggling with the effects of dealing with these testimonies and the emotions they produced in me and in the participants.

Emotions are not just produced by researchers on participants, as is often considered in methodological discussions, they also precede the space of the interview and frame the research process and the researcher's experiences. While reading databases that covered many cases of abuse, torture and killings, I developed a resistance to looking at such descriptions. It was not easy to classify, create taxonomies or find patterns in such horrible ways to kill human beings and to violate their rights. I also became cautious about describing details of abuse, torture and humiliation. This situation pervaded the entire research project, and required a constant exercise of reflection during the writing process and in formulating its conclusions.

On Terminology

How to refer to the subjects of this research has been a continuing concern. Whenever possible, original terms will be kept in the text. This is to avoid an immediate translation that would blur meanings that are relevant for this research. The Spanish term *travesti* (transvestite) will be kept in order to stress relations of social exclusion, exploitation and marginality faced by some transgender women, mostly those in sex work. Violence against *travestis* is at the centre of my case study of Colombia. Don Kulick's ethnography of Brazilian *travestis* (1998) shows that they face patterns of violence similar to those described here. They have also created a sense of collectivity that cannot be merged under broader terms such as transgender or LGBT community.

Some participants in Colombia used the short *trans* to refer to *transexuales, travestis* or *transgeneristas*; even if these imply different meanings, the term *trans* will be used in that context. *Marica* (faggot) is a pejorative term used in Spanish to refer to homosexual men and those who deviate from gender and sexual norms. Since it has a negative meaning, it is only employed when discussing how it is used to name targets of violence.

Stabane is a term used in Zulu for intersex persons. It is also used in townships for self-identified lesbian or gay persons. It was mentioned in interviews with South African participants in the Gauteng area. The interplay between different ways to self-identify, some based on traditional cultures and other in international languages, was a constant finding in this research. That diversity was kept in the book instead of adapting a generalised language.

Early references in human rights reports in Colombia used the term *homosexual,* in the singular, or its plural *homosexuales*, in association with *travestis* (Ordoñez 1996). In the human rights database consulted in Colombia, *travesti*s are named with masculine nouns. It is only during the last years that *transgenerista* (transgender) and *mujer trans* (trans woman) have started to be used to identify some of the victims. In the detailed descriptions given in the archives, some victims who were classified as *homosexual* and named with masculine nouns were known also by a female name. Some of those victims were classified generically as *homosexuales* and in databases maybe as *travesti*s or transgender women. Clearly, the careful use of terminology in the research is of great importance.

The acronym LGBT, for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, will be used here only when referring to a kind of activism that has been developing in the most recent decades in local and international contexts around gender identity and sexual orientation as a matter of human rights demands. The idea of LGBT has been useful as a lobbying strategy. It can be seen also as a political project to connect diverse groups for common purposes. Besides, it has gained recognition in mainstream media. It will not be used here to describe those who are victims, since it blurs important differences in causes of violence, and assumes that different groups share the same reasons to struggle. When the term is used, it is because it appears in the primary source.

This research did not collect information about the situation of intersex persons. Therefore the current tendency to add the initial 'I' to the acronym LGBT will be avoided. This is not meant to ignore their victimhood in armed conflicts or political transitions. Rather, it results from the

limitations of this research and the decision not to assume general classificatory terms.

Issues of terminology and identity politics remain a matter of discussion throughout this book. The use of identity terms to refer to non-heterosexual subjectivities has been widely criticised. It has been seen as part of the homogenising processes of globalisation, cultural imposition and cultural hegemony. The assumption that gender and sexual diversity experiences construct particular collectives has implicit assumptions of belonging and ascription.

Some authors consider the globalisation of sexual identities as a factor of diversification and a space for promoting international dialogues (Altman 2001). It is also the case that identity categories are becoming a language incorporated by international human rights organisations, lobbying and activism. This situation makes any sharp separation from identity politics difficult. Using an international terminology would make communication easier. But the arguments given above are decisive. Instead, what is required is a constant contextualisation and reflection on the practices that create a sense of collectivity, and the ways in which naming affects subjectivity. That is attempted in this book.

As a concept, homophobia has been a political tool for activism, lobbying and the inclusion of anti-homosexual violence in public agendas. It resulted from a search for a core problem to articulate social mobilisations and collective identities. In this way, homophobia as a concept is political, which is the reason the term is maintained in this book. At the same time, it is important to call attention to the concept's failures and limitations, as will be further explained in Chap. 4.

The current tendency to extend the notion of phobia to forms of violence, discrimination and exclusion experienced by lesbian and transgender women and men assumes that the reasons for their experiences are similar to those explained under the idea of homophobia. Lesbian feminism has criticised the concept of homophobia and its derivative lesbophobia for depoliticising the reaction of the patriarchal and heterosexual systems against lesbianism, and for assuming that social reactions against lesbians have the same nature as the ones against homosexual men (Kitzinger 1987). The term transphobia not only creates inadequate analogies, but tends to render specific forms of victimisation invisible (Namaste 2000; Stryker 2008). The violence faced by transgender women is more than the result of prejudice. It is rooted in social structures of poverty, limited access to education or health services, and related factors that have

recently come into focus in activism (Transgender-Europe 2012, 2014).
For these reasons, terminology such as lesbophobia, biphobia or transphobia will not be used.

The generalised idea of anti-homosexual violence will be used only as a descriptive term. Specific forms of violence will be under discussion throughout the text.

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Armed Conflict and Sexual Para-politics in Colombia

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the role of anti-homosexual violence in social change and its relation to the gender and sexual order as a whole. Throughout the social conflict in Colombia, armed groups have intervened in gender and sexual politics to control the lives of women and men by violence. This has affected the daily lives of communities in both war and non-war zones, constructing new systems of government and reshaping social relations. Thus, new concepts for sexual politics become necessary to understand this.

The chapter begins with a description of the long socio-political conflict in Colombia, showing the different forms of structural violence. Then it turns to Colombian human rights databases, to see how suffering has been inflicted on particular gendered and sexualised subjects. After that, the chapter considers how anti-homosexual violence becomes a strategy of warfare and a means to control populations in conflict zones through collective threats and the fabrication of an enemy within the community. Then it traces the personal narratives of two people who were targets of violence, the ways they responded and the blurring of any difference between excessive and normalised violence. Finally, it considers how the combination of high impact of violence on non-combatant civilians and the constant reshaping of the state through violence create a new form of gender and sexual politics.

Context

From the early 1950s, the Colombian socio-political conflict has had its roots in struggles for land that went beyond the emergence of guerrilla groups and contests for state power. The conflict has developed through several periods (GMH 2013). The first (1958–1982) was characterised by the transition from political struggles between traditional parties to subversive violence during which guerrilla groups emerged in different rural areas, mainly in the Andean highlands. Groups of peasants resisting authoritarian political and economic elites mutated into organised guerrillas, inspired by revolutionary movements.

In the second period (1982–1996), these groups expanded and increased their political and military power, while another type of armed group, broadly known as *paramilitares*, organised against them with the support of local elites. Initially, *paramilitares* were constituted from radical fractions of armies and alliances between criminal groups and local elites. They gradually increased their organisation and the magnitude of their cruel actions against civilians. Simultaneously, drug-trafficking industries increased and state power partially collapsed.

In the third period (1996–2005), the armed conflict intensified, with *guerrillas* and *paramilitares* fighting to control new territories, and state institutions becoming reorganised in an attempt to deal with the political crisis created by the conflict. The war on drugs led by the United States merged with its internationalised war on terrorism, and Colombian *guerrillas* were classified as "terrorists." In the fourth period (2005–2012), armed groups remobilised their forces, while counter-insurgency state military actions reached a peak of effectiveness, weakening, though not defeating, the *guerrillas*. Political negotiations towards demobilisation of the *paramilitares* failed, and their fragmented groups reorganised as criminal gangs. Drug trafficking has continued to be a key element in the organisation of new armed groups, more criminal and more defiant of state rule.

The current period has seen peace negotiations between FARC and the Colombian government, which began in late 2012. On 24 November 2016, President Juan Manuel Santos and Timoleón Jimenez, FARC leader, signed a peace agreement. The first version of the agreement had been followed by intense debates in the country and had to be adjusted after a national referendum voted against it on 2 October 2016.

Throughout the history of the conflict, multiple forms of inflicting suffering have been used as war tactics. These have caused immense damage and have had an economic, social, psychological, moral, cultural and political impact on society. Nevertheless, the political conflict is not the main cause of violent death in Colombia. In 2003, homicides associated with the armed conflict were between 11 per cent and 17 per cent of total homicides, and the figure decreased in subsequent years to between 8 per cent and 9 per cent (Granada et al. 2009a). The socio-political conflict has mutated to become a heterogeneous interaction of violence, armed actors, reasons to struggle and reasons to resist—with a long-term impact on non-combatant populations. Communities and civilians have been in the crossfire of the struggles between state forces, guerrillas and *paramilitares*. At the same time, these communities have lead many initiatives towards the transformation of the conflict.

By 2014, there were officially 65,14,351 victims of the conflict (Victims-Unit 2014). Of these, 86 per cent were victims of displacement (56,32,062), 13 per cent of homicide (8,48,710), 2.5 per cent of threats (1,65,634) and 2 per cent of forced disappearance (1,35,863). That same year, Colombia became the country with the second largest number of internally displaced people in the world, after Syria with 6.5 million and before Nigeria with 3.3 million (Albuja et al. 2014).

Concurrently, Colombia lived a process of reshaping the state. This was driven by the increased influence of non-state actors such as left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitaries and drug barons in public office. Complex arrangements for government combined violent private coercion with the capture of public resources, restrictions on public life and alliances between political, economic and social elites (Gutiérrez 2010). These arrangements were sustained by an authoritarian project of change from the centre, and the fast social mobility secured by drug dealing. The alliance between *paramilitares* and politicians was not only a project of economic control and territorial expansion through violence, but also a political project towards the creation of a national political pact (López 2010). This resulted in *parapolítica*, a term coined in Colombia to explain the connection between paramilitary violence and national and local politics.

At the same time, Colombia has had active, massive and extensive mobilisations for peace and non-violent transformation of the conflict. Mobilisations were small in the early 1970s, but gradually increased. There have been around 250 massive mobilisations, both national and

local (García-Durán 2013). These mobilisations were peaceful and used multiple mechanisms to educate, politicise, protest, organise and resist the actions of armed groups. In 1991, a new Constitution was enacted, as a response to peace negotiations with some guerrilla groups and to the demands of civil society to democratise the country. By the mid-1990s, it was estimated that at least 50 million Colombians had been mobilised in different peace initiatives.

Gender and sexual violence have been at the core of the Colombian socio-political conflict. They have been used by all the armed actors, as women and human rights organisations have documented extensively (Amnesty-International 2011; Díaz et al. 2012). Between 1997 and 2005, members of the paramilitary group, Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), established despotic control over the north of the country, using multiple forms of violence that radically transformed the daily lives of women, men, girls and boys (CNRR 2011; GMH 2013). The atrocities committed against women included almost all forms of gender and sexual violence present in other conflicts throughout the world, such as rape, sexual slavery, torture, public humiliation and economic exploitation (Díaz et al. 2012; Pinzón 2009). Political violence also acted to suppress women's leadership, political activism and community work.

Violence also transformed the lives of men. Forced displacement and the impact of war on productive activities interfered with their role as providers and as family and community authorities. Men fleeing to the cities could not adjust easily to job markets that did not require their skills as peasants. The impossibility of protecting women from the actions of armed gangs affected masculinities, and this was successfully used to diminish resistance and community cohesion (GMH 2013, p. 312).

OLD AND NEW PATTERNS OF VICTIMHOOD

Exploring who the victims of anti-homosexual violence in Colombia are involves facing many problems of documentation. Homophobia and associated violence in the conflict only started to be documented systematically by human rights and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) organisations in the 2000s (Colombia-Diversa 2005, 2008, 2013; Payne 2007). During the early 1990s, some isolated documents were produced by human rights and gay activists. It was not until brief references—in declarations by demobilised *paramilitares* and in academic studies about the regional impact of the conflict (CNRR 2011)—showed the use of anti-homosexual

violence, that state institutions began to pay attention to the issue. This led to a national report on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals in armed conflict by Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, a state agency in charge of preserving historical memory as part of post-conflict policies in Colombia (Prada et al. 2015).

The challenges not only involve the issue of documentation, they also include how violence is understood: what relationships between forms of violence are assumed, and how continuities or changes in the same type of violence are identified. The current study draws on a database that was built on a concept of violence that results from "social intolerance." The database included the notion of "social cleansing" as an explanation of socio-political violence. Popularised in the 1980s across Latin America, the idea of social cleansing expressed a connection between para-institutional agents and violence against those at the margins of society: homeless youth, prostitutes, drug users, street criminals and homosexuals; in brief, the poor, the undesirable, the "disposable" ones (Ordoñez 1996). Para-institutional violence targeted not only the political opposition, but also anyone who adopted attitudes or belonged to a group that challenged the existing social, political and economic order (Sluka 2000).

Para-institutional violence connected with what was initially called "moralistic violence," which justified the elimination of marginal individuals, because they embodied threats to moral or social values (Camacho and Guzmán 1990). However, more than prejudice or stigma is involved. As Carlos Perea shows in his research on Bogota, social cleansing acts as a way of demarcating the boundaries of what is socially acceptable in the community. In a dramatic way, through the use of suffering, communities define themselves as a "pure" body against a "polluting" other (2016).

The violence of social cleansing has been documented for several decades. In 1994, a joint report of the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on Torture and on Extrajudicial Killing mentioned the actions of death squads against homosexuals as part of social cleansing operations in Colombia. This report called attention to the legitimacy, impunity and complicity of the authorities in such crimes. But not until recently have state institutions begun to pay attention. LGBT activism and international pressure have been pivotal in making those issues a matter of public policy.

For the current research, the database of Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP) was consulted to create an archive covering the period 1988–2010. CINEP has been producing human rights reports since the mid-1980s, collecting cases from the national media,

testimony from victims and reports by grassroots organisations. Two main forms of anti-homosexual violence associated with socio-political conflict in Colombia were found in their records (Serrano-Amaya 2014). One is assassination and physical violence against *travestis* and homosexuals who are vulnerable as a consequence of living in poverty. The other is the use of threats against wider categories of people who had non-hegemonic positions in the gender and social orders.

This evidence suggests that anti-homosexual violence is not a fixed pattern, but varies according to its context. Places where there were more threats did not have more cases of direct violence. Direct violence targeted individuals in specific locations such as sex work zones at night. Threats were mainly directed towards groups. Nevertheless, these forms of violence can also appear together; threatening leaflets can be distributed before a person is victimised, or after an episode of direct violence occurs.

A common pattern is that *travesti*s and *homosexuales* are killed by armed groups while they are on the streets or in public venues. The armed groups have the necessary workforce and infrastructure, such as vehicles and weapons, to commit these crimes. They usually work in pairs: one driving the vehicle, the other firing the weapon. They usually operated in the following way: victims were approached on the streets, rather than in their houses, late at night when they were by themselves or with only a few other people. Victims were young, possibly engaged in sex work. In some cases the victim was forced to enter a car, after which the body was dumped in an isolated area, such as forests on the outskirts of the city.

This pattern resembles other actions of extrajudicial killing squads as well as the kind of violence described as social cleansing (Rojas 1994). Killings of *travesti*s and *homosexuales* were not random isolated events. They show a pattern resulting from the conscious actions of sectors of society that were willing to hire criminals to annihilate a particular social group.

There are, however, differences in place and time that need to be considered to understand how armed groups used such acts of violence, in which circumstances and for which political purpose. Analysis of *Noche y Niebla*, the human rights report by CINEP consulted for this research, showed that in the 1980s and 1990s, most of the cases of direct violence occurred in capital cities. This began to shift in the early 2000s when more cases of direct violence were occurring in medium to small cities and more were registered in the Caribbean region. In that area, collective threats and the use of threatening leaflets by *paramilitares* became more common

during that period. Nevertheless, the older type of anti-homosexual violence, concentrated in major cities and particularly in the south-west of Cali, continued alongside the new pattern.

These findings support those of research by the sociologist María Catalina Gómez (2012). Using a local newspaper as her source, Gómez found that from 1980 to 2000 there were 99 cases of social cleansing squads murdering *homosexuales* and *travestis* in the city of Cali. Some of the earlier cases were associated with a group called *Muerte a Homosexuales Peligrosos* (MAHOPI, Death to Dangerous Homosexuals). The pattern of murder was the same as the one documented in this research. *Travestis* and homosexuals were killed using a firearm late at night in cruising or sex work areas. Peaks in the number of deaths paralleled extrajudicial killings of youth, petty criminals and the homeless, possibly financed by drug barons, business owners and urban guerrillas (Gómez 2012, p. 190). There was also evidence of the participation of police in these acts or, at the very least, complicity with the perpetrators.

The earlier pattern of violence was mainly associated with the activities of death squads and socially intolerant groups. Death squads are a combination of state-sponsored violence and social violence in which state personnel, often police and military, or semi-private groups, organise to eliminate opponents or unwanted groups (Sluka 2000). The more recent pattern appears to be associated mainly with *paramilitares* or right-wing armies organised to fight against guerrilla groups.

Not too sharp a distinction should be drawn, however. Studies of violence in Latin America generally and Colombia specifically have shown connections and exchanges between legal and illegal groups (Jones 2004; López 2010). There have often been explicit alliances between agents of different types of violence: legal armies in alliance with *paramilitares*; police associated with criminal gangs and death squads; urban *guerrillas* and urban *paramilitares* allied with urban criminals; while urban gangs have been hired by economic, political and social elites to commit extrajudicial killings. There have also been cases in which communities organised squads to provide private security for themselves. In the Colombian context, any identification of a violent perpetrator should consider the scale of these interactions and alliances among legal, illegal and paralegal actors.

Struggles between security state mechanisms, guerrillas and *paramilitares* have also been affected by criminal activities. Local elites, local politicians and public employees have also been known to have alliances and to collaborate with guerrillas and *paramilitares*. Illegal armed groups

have expressed their preference for some local politicians and antagonism towards others, limiting the freedom of elections. Non-lethal forms of victimisation such as displacement increased in the years when lethal violence decreased. What is more, areas with high rates of homicide were also the ones where illegal armed actors were struggling for power (Granada et al. 2009b).

There is extensive documentation on complicity and direct or indirect collaboration between state agents and illegal armed groups, particularly with *paramilitares*. In several atrocious events, legal forces have been present before *paramilitares* committed crimes, or they have chosen not to attend the calls from communities asking for help or protection. Members of the military have participated in extrajudicial killings to obtain privileges such as promotions and economic compensations awarded in exchange for these violent acts (Cinep 2011).

Complicity between legal and illegal armed actors goes hand in hand with impunity. Statistics about impunity in the Colombian legal system have been a matter of academic and political debate. In different studies, depending on the methodology, the rate varies between 32 per cent and 99 per cent (Restrepo and Martínez 2004). The problems include inefficient registration systems, a lack of trust from the general public and fear caused by threats to court officials. That situation is worse in areas directly affected by the conflict. In the year 2000, for example, only 6 per cent of homicide cases in those areas were solved compared with 16 per cent in non-conflict areas (Restrepo and Martínez 2004, p. 20). Both figures, in international terms, are extremely low.

The Colombian state has implemented several strategies to strengthen its legal system and tackle the shortfall in convictions. In 2002, a new prosecution system was implemented (Law 906). Several policies have been enacted to reduce impunity in key matters such as crimes related to international human rights laws (Vicepresidencia-Colombia 2005).

Failure to convict, as well as a lack of adequate research into crimes, is relevant for this research. The national NGO, Colombia Diversa, has registered 542 homicides of LGBT people between 2006 and 2011 (Colombia-Diversa 2013). Of those, 300 did not result in any legal process; most of the victims were not even identified. Half of the cases under investigation are still in the preliminary stages, since perpetrators have not been identified. The earliest of the cases have already been archived without any results. Prejudice among judicial officers seems to be a common problem affecting these cases (Colombia-Diversa 2013, p. 28).

This failure to achieve convictions is not a new situation. Cases of violence against *travestis* and homosexuals in poverty have been identified since the early 1990s by international agencies and Colombian activists (Ordoñez 1996), without much action by state authorities following. Lack of trust in the state is supported by a long history of state-sponsored denial and lack of action.

DIVIDING COMMUNITIES AND CREATING THE OTHER

A long-term element in the Colombian conflict is the prevalence of politics based on exclusion, restriction of public spaces and murder of adversaries. The most evident expression of this was the extrajudicial killing from 1986 to 2000 of around 5000 members of Unión Patriótica, a political party related to the FARC guerrilla group. This has been called a "political genocide" (Gomez-Suarez 2007), and it had a long-lasting impact on issues of political participation, activism and alternative political projects.

Threatening communities before, during and after military actions has also been a common strategy of armed groups. Inhabitants of areas in dispute find graffiti on their walls or receive leaflets announcing the arrival of armed groups. This often results in communities leaving their homes and towns. Violent groups sometimes explain or justify their actions through the same means. There are several references in human rights databases about perpetrators of extrajudicial killings, who left written or printed notes justifying why a person was assassinated. For example, on 29 July 1999, when a social cleansing squad killed four people and wounded two more in a marginalised area of Santander the Quilichao, Cauca, a leaflet was found close to the bodies saying, "The cleansing of drug users, thieves and rapists will continue." This provided the reasons for the murders while simultaneously announcing more for the future.

Noche y Niebla shows several instances of killings by guerrillas, *paramilitares* and squads after they had threatened communities, groups and individuals not only for living in disputed territories, but also for supporting, or belonging to, opposing groups. For example, on 20 August 1998, members of a social cleansing squad threatened the inhabitants of Puerto Tejada, a village in the southern department of Cauca. Most of the individuals threatened were young and the threat was circulated with a list of their names.

This example shows a pattern that continued throughout the period explored in *Noche y Niebla*. A medium of communication was used to let

the threat victims know that they were under surveillance and to warn them of the consequences of their actions. Threatened victims were usually named to let them know they had been identified. Sometimes, threats were against social subjects defined in general ways—youth, thieves or drug users. At other times, the threats gave specific names or nicknames of members of communities. The media were often graffiti on walls, or handwritten or typed leaflets distributed in the streets, or glued to electricity poles. Some were written using standard Spanish grammar, while others had spelling mistakes, or used colloquial language.

The use of threats and assassinations to restrict political space can explain the second pattern of violence found in relation to anti-homosexual violence. The earliest examples of threats against *homosexuales* came from areas where *paramilitares* were disputing territorial control (Barrancabermeja) or trying to expand their zone of influence (Montes de María). These included mainly small to medium size cities, such as Ovejas, Cienaga, Cerete, El Banco or Soledad, and regional capital cities in the coastal and lowland Caribbean region, such as Cartagena, Santa Marta and Barrancabermeja.

This pattern coincides with what has been called *la ruta del terror* (CNRR 2011) created by the expansion of *paramilitares* in the north of Colombia in the late 1990s and early 2000s. These threats were issued by the paramilitary group, Héroes de Montes de María, belonging to the broader structure of the AUC, which has been identified as one of the main perpetrators of gender and sexual violence in that region (CNRR 2011, p. 58).

Most of the threats in the whole database created for this research are associated with the actions of *paramilitares* (77 per cent) and occurred between 2009 and 2010 (61 per cent). In *Noche y Niebla*, five threats were associated with "intolerance groups," one was connected to the police, and another one to the guerrilla group, Ejercito de Liberación Nacional (ELN). On 2 February 2009, police threatened a group of transwomen who were in a public space in the city of Cali. On 25 January 2009, members of the Frente Capitán Parmenio, of the ELN, circulated a leaflet with the names of demobilised *paramilitares* and *homosexuales* to be executed.

Paradoxically, the areas where those threats occurred coincided with the place where the government created the first *zona de rehabilitación y consolidación* (consolidation and rehabilitation zone). First defined in 2002, these zones were created as a strategy to regain state control of areas affected by "criminality" using "exceptional measures" and giving

"extraordinary powers" to the public force (Decree 2002, 9 September 2002). In that period, lethal violence associated with the conflict started to decrease, whereas non-lethal actions such as displacement increased (Granada et al. 2009b). Simultaneously, LGBT organisations identified a rise in police harassment (Colombia-Diversa 2013).

Similarly, these threats did not disappear with the demobilisation of the paramilitary groups belonging to the AUC between 2003 and 2005. The groups that emerged after that event, commonly called *bandas criminales emergentes* (emerging criminal bands) continued the same pattern of threats and violence. One of these bands, called the Aguilas Negras (Black Eagles), was associated with threatening leaflets in seven different cities between 2005 and 2009. In 2005, the Grupo de Limpieza Urbano (Urban Cleansing Group), acting in Pereira, threatened *maricas* and female sex workers working in the city centre.

Collective threats can be seen as ways of creating and demarcating the boundaries of social groups by sharply defining the subordinate position in gender and sexual roles. The perpetrators of the threats and violence present themselves as protecting the community and even as providing a private security service. The despised other is defined as being in itself a threat to the imagined homogeneous community. In 39 identified threats, the most common term used for the victims was *homosexuales* (25 cases). *Lesbianas* was mentioned in eight cases, *maricas* in six, *travesti*s in five, *bisexuales* in four and *comunidad LGBT* in four. These references do not exclude each other. In six cases where lesbians were mentioned, it was in association with homosexuals, and the same happens in references to bisexuals.

A key to understanding how that collective other is constructed is the connection with other targets. In only 6 of the 39 cases, targets were defined exclusively in terms of gender or sexuality. In the great majority, *homosexuales, lesbianas, travestis, bisexuales* or *comunidad LGBT* were mentioned in association with other social subjects. The most common association was with *prostitutas* (sex workers), which appeared in 23 of the cases. The second association is with drugs: drug users were mentioned in 16 cases and dealers in 11. Thieves or *ladrones* constitute the next group, appearing 13 times; after them come youth and youth cultures, in 10 cases. Leaflets mixed up all these targets fairly randomly.

Guillermo, a community educator, had received one of those leaflets days before I interviewed him in late 2012. It was left under his front door. His house was both the venue for an education project on HIV

and also his home, where he lived with his wife and their one-year-old daughter. When asked about possible reasons for such a threat, Guillermo suggested it was because the project offered education and health services to transwomen and sex workers. The leaflet contained a death threat to "maricas, putas y drogadictos" (faggots, whores and drug addicts). It was not the first time it had happened. Despite the fact that Guillermo is used to them and thinks it is best to ignore them, they can have a real impact on the community as a whole.

The way threatening leaflets restrict participation in public spaces was described in detail by interviewees. Victor, a gay man living with HIV and an HIV activist, once received an intimidating phone call calling him *sidoso*, in other words someone living with AIDS, and threatening to burn his workplace. For him, those leaflets create an extended, not localised, fear. The wave of threats that had started just before we spoke in 2012 had changed his forms of socialising, like going to the beach after partying in gay discos. As Victor mentioned, once leaflets are distributed, people stop going out, "trans girls do not dress up" and prefer to stay at home. This situation affects not only gay men or *travesti*s, but other groups as well, such as youth in working class neighbourhoods.

The power of these threats creates in its victims a sense of belonging to a group under surveillance and siege by unknown forces. When reading one of the leaflets that circulated a few months before the interview, Lena, a young professional who lives in a working class neighbourhood in Santa Marta, realised that out of a list of six possible threats, she and her girlfriend matched at least four: being politically active, being associated with youth culture, being in a sexual minority and having a non-judgemental attitude to drug use. Lena emphasised that the power of such leaflets is partially symbolic; they exhort people to live by a certain moral order and they are intended to homogenise norms and ways of behaving. Leaflets create doubt, since you cannot know what would happen if you ignore them. "They don't have a face," she explained. These threats are sometimes anonymous or signed with a nickname; since it is not possible to identify who is sending them they could be anyone. The threat is ever-present and public: leaflets and threats seem to be something that *todo el mundo sabe* (everybody knows).

Threatening leaflets both create and enhance conditions of discrimination and violence. When followed by a violent event, threats seem to show their effectiveness, even if there is no clear connection between the two. The threats themselves thus involve the administration of pain.

Participants mentioned cases of homosexual men, *travestis* or lesbians who left their hometowns at the time of an increased distribution of leaflets and the expansion of *paramilitares*. Forced migration due to the actions of armed gangs occurs in the life stories of other transwomen in Colombia (Prada et al. 2012).

Mutual Constitution of Violence

From the perspective of individuals, anti-homosexual violence is not an isolated event. It is the result of multiple, mutually constituted forms of violence. This is best seen in actual life stories. Two will be narrated in this chapter. The first shows how experiences of victimisation are juxtaposed. The second shows how an individual may internalise the political projects of social control pursued by the armed actors.

Zoraya's Story

Thirty-eight-year-old Zoraya defines herself as a *chica trans* (a transwoman). She had been a long-term fighter for the rights of transpeople in the Caribbean coast of Colombia, even before taking part in LGBT activism. She explains that there is something in her personality that helps her to deal with the mockery, insults and aggressions that transwomen face daily on the streets. However this has not always been the case, and she has fought back on several occasions.

Zoraya's story shows the confluence of experiences of victimisation and strategies of survival. These are gendered according to particular experiences and locations. In terms of what it can say about armed and political violence, Zoraya's story shows the irregular layers of violence that are juxtaposed in protracted conflicts. Illegal armed forces have fought to impose a totalitarian power in the areas under their control. Sometimes they have succeeded in obtaining it, at least locally. However, such power has weaknesses and moments of fracture and failure. When armed groups have the power to decide who lives and who dies, social agents learn to use those fractures.

In order to understand how several layers of violence interact, it is important to consider the lived experience of social structures. Zoraya was born in Santa Marta, a Caribbean coastal city known for its factories, industries and commerce. She grew up with her mother's family in Mamatoco, an area of the city known for its cultural traditions and

working class constituencies. Being in the city was her best chance for access to education. Her mother spent part of the year harvesting coffee in farms in the region, in order to support her. Education was her last chance of becoming somebody, her mother had told her. For a working class family in Zoraya's context, education is not a matter of course, but the result of a huge family effort and investment. She left school when she was around 13 years old and started a career as a hairdresser, soon after her first contact with *travesti*s. Several months at a farm and a change of schools did not succeed in keeping her away from the new world she had just discovered.

After she left school and trained as a hairdresser, Zoraya began moving around in search of work opportunities. Some of these trips lasted three or more years. The route she described, from the Colombian Caribbean lowlands to Venezuela, falls on an axis of economic development and legal and illegal extractive economies. New opportunities were offered, but had to be balanced with the risks she faced as a transwoman living in areas controlled by legal or illegal armies. If there had been periods of unemployment, she did not mention them. In the description of her working life, she seems to be a confident and hard-working person.

She also narrates that period of her life in terms of shifting gender, collective and political identities. After starting the life of a *travestismo*, of being a full time woman, she discovered the world of *transformistas*— female impersonators who perform in gay venues, beauty pageants and in the entertainment industry. When she realised that *transformismo* was also a space for the commercial exploitation of transwomen, she distanced herself from it. At that point, she got to know LGBT activism and became an outreach educator and leader of the transgender community in her city. It was through her access to activism and its language that she started to use its discourse to define herself as a transwoman. Her description of those changes as entering into new worlds, discovering new lives, is not accidental. More than identity labels, what she described is a combination of practices that include gender and sexual aspects, but are not reduced to them. Those worlds had forms of interaction, codes of conduct, networks and alliances and a sense of belonging, in which she learned to move and which shaped her as a subject.

Zoraya described the convergence of social, institutional and extrajudicial violence experienced by a specific individual. Her description exemplifies also the lived experience of violence, as a social structure. Almost at the beginning of the interview, when describing her discovery of the world of

*travesti*s and her first steps living as a young woman, she also mentioned her first experience of *maltrato* (abuse). Once her family discovered she was spending her school holidays with other *travestis*, her uncle stormed into the beauty parlour, looked for her, ripped off her blouse, washed off her makeup and forced her to leave. Then she was sent to a farm, where her stepfather forced her to do manual work, such as carrying coffee packages and herding cattle, an experience she described as "another abuse." The next experience of violence she mentioned happened when she was denied entrance to a public party; when she reacted to this, she was physically attacked.

The description of her experiences of violence related to armed conflict lasted a significant part of the interview. There was no need to ask questions, since she eloquently described events and explained the roles of the different actors involved. There was wisdom, not just information, in her narrative.

During her trips looking for work opportunities, she faced the effects of the political violence affecting Colombia. Once she was in a town under the control of *paramilitares* where leaflets threatening "whores, witches, wanderers, drunkards and faggots" started circulating. Being the only transperson in the town, she felt they were targeting her. In another town, when the *paramilitares* gathered the community to explain to them the social and moral codes they would impose, she was warned not to create scandals, not to be too open on the streets or to give reasons for people to complain about her behaviour. Upon her return to the city, violence did not stop and the conjunction between criminality and political violence made her feel that she was constantly at risk.

One of the experiences with political violence that Zoraya described in more detail was when she was living in a little village close to the frontier with Venezuela. A group she defined as part of the *autodefensas* (self-defence paramilitary organisation), regulated what kind of people could or could not stay in the village, among many other aspects of everyday life. Once she arrived, she was asked to go to their camp with the owner of the beauty parlour where she was working, and they instructed her on how to behave. She realised they already knew who she was: "You are the girl from the coast! Come here, this guy wants to *casarse* (get married)!" Her answer dramatically changed her time there. Playing with the similar pronunciation of the words to wed (*casar*) and to hunt (*cazar*), she answered, "Hunting? What are we going to hunt? Rabbits? Quails? Lizards?" Her answer caused collective laughter and the paramilitary

commander decreed: "We like you. You should stay." She laughed as she remembered the episode. What she thought would be a death sentence or exposure to sexual violence became an invitation to stay for dinner and drinks. After that, she became *la niña del pueblo*—the spoiled girl in town—enjoying a temporary period of protection and respect.

Behind this description, there is also reference to how she ended up living amid several forms of violence. The fear of retaliation and the totalitarian control exercised by the armed group in town meant that men stopped insulting and bullying her. The homophobia associated with hegemonic masculinities seems not always to be attached to the power exercised by militarised masculinities. The only one who dared to challenge the relative protection that Zoraya experienced faced severe consequences. One day, for no apparent reason, a man threw a bag of garbage at her. Zoraya reacted by spreading another bag of garbage in the middle of a party the man was attending. The man reacted violently and gave her 72 hours to leave the town. The incident became known to the *autodefensas* group that controlled the town and the commander clearly expressed, "Does he think he has more authority than me here? You will stay here forever if I say so!" After the man was punished with two days of forced labour, he avoided any contact with Zoraya.

Several elements are notable here. First, what in another context would be considered a standard episode of discrimination, aggression and anti-homosexual violence, in the context of political violence becomes a dispute between authorities, and between civil and military masculinities. In order to achieve certain masculinity, the man who threatened Zoraya exercised violence. To do it, he counted on the support of his male peers and part of community. However, he did not calculate that above the presumed legitimacy of his male control over (trans) women was the violent control exercised by the male armed force. This kind of control can even subordinate the usual perception of transwomen as a threat, reflecting the lack of power that civilians have against the authoritarian control of the (male) armed group.

The second element is the confluence of several forms of violence. Though Zoraya obtained temporary protection from the paramilitary commander, the protection was an extension of his violent control of almost every aspect of the community under his regime. As he declared, he could make her stay there forever if he wanted. Zoraya is subject not only to the violence against transwomen exercised by some members of the community, but also to the political violence and control exercised by

the armed actor. Those forms of violence are not equivalent, nor do they always act at the same time, as this case shows. The reasons that activate them, and their consequences, are also different.

The third element is the continuity of violence. In spite of the fragile protection that Zoraya received from the armed group, she decided to leave the town two months later. One day Zoraya's friend and host, Lola, was attacked by a gay man and his gang of young thugs. Zoraya reacted by using everything available as a weapon, including her boots and sticks, to defend her friend. Zoraya argued that the dispute had been ignited by the request for a cigarette, but was rooted in the jealousy the man felt for the important role that Lola played in the community. He was a gay man involved in drug dealing and the sexual exploitation of minors, and had already been warned by the paramilitary group to stop. Once the armed group found out about the confrontation, they summoned the man to their camp. He chose not to face the armed group, and days later he disappeared from the town. His family blamed Zoraya for his disappearance and threatened her with revenge. She left town, despite the fact that the leader of the armed group had stated his continuing support for her, even explaining to the man's family his reasons for objecting to his behaviour.

Several forms of violence are simultaneously enacted here: political violence, criminality and anti-homosexual violence. These intersect when the illegal armed group both represses criminality and administers punishment. The fact that a homosexual man was victim of this violence is relevant, but in this case, it seems his sexual orientation was only one factor in his victimisation. Finally, it was the realisation that she was in danger in multiple ways that led Zoraya to leave; she had to make a complex analysis of the risks she was facing.

Zoraya's description of the complex combination of factors in her decision is relevant to the wider issue of understanding anti-homosexual violence in contexts of political conflict. One-sided or linear explanations are not adequate.

Her narrative of violence did not end with the moments in which she felt threatened or when she experienced direct violence. After every description of violence, there was a reference to what she learned, or how she faced the situation. From her peers she learned to fight back to overcome bullying and violence on the streets. Defending her friends, even with violence, was a solution she employed several times. In other cases she used her sense of humour to challenge the threatening power of illegally armed groups, gaining a chance to express her voice and obtain some protection.

When talking about the different cases, when she realised she was a target of political violence, Zoraya also mentioned her ability to identify the right moment to leave and how to do it. In each displacement and arrival, she found ways to create social networks in order to get some support. If necessary, she looked for a strategy for talking with armed groups and landlords to it make clear that she was not a threat, challenging usual stereotypes about transwomen. The exercise of violence by armed groups was just one among the challenges she had faced. Violence was not an overwhelming force, but a situation in which she was able to find the cracks and create a temporary space for manoeuvre.

There is a risk in interpretation if these strategies for facing violence are isolated or described as resistance. That could lead to the impression that someone like Zoraya was a rebel, able to overcome structural violence and the power of armed men. At the same time, stressing only the victimisation would render invisible the ways Zoraya positioned herself in relation to violence and strategised to avoid destructive power. In this case, to consider domination or resistance as separate spheres is not enough. Even defining them in terms of small resistances against structural domination seems insufficient. The story that Zoraya shared is a story of survival, of her permanent struggle to make a liveable and dignified life for herself.

Lena's Story

Lena is a young anthropologist who lives in Santa Marta with her girl-friend. She was born in 1987 in Medellin, and when she was a child, her family migrated to Santa Marta, a major city on the Caribbean coast, in order to start a small commercial business. In spite of spending all her life in Santa Marta, she has always been perceived as a *cachaca*, someone coming from the country's inland. This is reflected in her light skin colour, her way of talking and dressing, and the fact that her family does not have extended connections in the region.

The story she shares illustrates life in a society that struggles to keep its cultural identity and to resist the impact of modernisation imposed by tourism and the opening of markets to international trade. Political violence, in particular the violence exercised by *paramilitares*, has been a key element in reconciling the changes required by the search for new markets with the survival of values that support a classist and racist society.

Lena grew up at a time when the city was living under the increasing power of *paramilitares*. She was still young when they used death squads

to strengthen their control. Now, despite the fact that the *paramilitares* have been officially demobilised, her fear continues. As a student activist and a woman living with another woman, her experiences of violence are directly related to the transition between different forms of violence she has lived with in the region.

An element that structured all of Lena's narrative was social control and the regulation of everyday life. Respect and recognition are key elements for such control. In October 2010, during a Halloween party, Lena and her girlfriend were asked to leave a bar because they kissed. The case created an outspoken discussion on Facebook. The bar is known for its youth culture and it is promoted as the place for tourists and trendy foreigners to visit. The owner of the place, whom they knew, called for "the rights of heterosexuals" to be respected, in the way *homosexuales* request respect. A close gay friend, who is very critical of the way society in Santa Marta deals with homosexuality, wrote in the online debate that they went too far by kissing in public. Lena's girlfriend's family used the public exposure of the event to try to stop their relationship. In spite of the debate, Lena did not at first associate the situation with direct exposure to violence. But after the event, there was a new wave of threatening leaflets in the city, and she realised the risk of physical violence to which she and her girlfriend were exposed.

That new wave of violence occurred after the demobilisation of *paramilitarismo* in the mid-2000s, and at a time when the city was struggling to become the new tourist centre of the area. Lena remembered that when the city was controlled by one of the paramilitary leaders, the economy was stable and there were not many concerns about criminality and security—a situation that began in the early 1990s and lasted until the mid-2000s. She remembers the first period was the hardest, because of the many social cleansing squads that operated. She was young at that time and does not remember direct attacks against homosexuals. But she did mention that two of her friends died at that time for being *pelucones*, young men with long hair associated with underground music and politics. *Paramilitares* exercised control over deviant behaviour: men with long hair were forced to cut it; women could not wear miniskirts or tight blouses; homosexuals and petty criminals were forced to leave the city or they would be killed.

There are at least three perceived results from this violent situation. One is the constant self-scrutiny of personal behaviour to assess how much risk is involved. For Lena and her girlfriend, being anthropologists gave them a way to read the realities surrounding them and to arrive at a balance

between the risks they took and the social situation they lived in. For this reason, they are always concerned, even at home, not to be seen as *chirretiarse*—as going too far—since "you never know who is watching you." Lena believed that this was especially the case in their situation as a lesbian couple in which anything could be used to justify violent actions. They must constantly balance other people's admiration for their relationship, "Your relationship is so cool," and the need to *estar pilas* (be careful).

The second result is an endless feeling of fear. Lena mentioned the fear of being a victim of violence several times during the interview. She argued that knowing you are always under the gaze of others when, for example, you want to express love for your partner, is reason enough to feel constant fear. Fear is also often expressed by Lena's mother, who is always asking her to be careful about what she posts on Facebook, or when she goes out. Knowledge of the city and its public spaces is also tainted by her fear. For instance, she feels scared when she is walking on the street and hears a motorbike approaching, since these vehicles are often used by hired killers to commit their crimes. There have been occasions when people have insulted them on the streets just for holding hands. She said, "Here people are killed for no reason and it is said we are giving a bad example to the youth by showing them what it is possible to be."

The final result is the dreadful certainty that, with all precautions taken, if something were to happen to them, others would believe the violence was justified since "they had asked for it." She concludes, "I always tell my girlfriend that it is very sad to think that if I am shot, people are going to say I had asked for it because I had demanded more than the city was willing to offer."

Parallel Social Orders

Considering currently popular ideas about gender as a normative matter, it is tempting to explain the evidence about anti-homosexual violence, its uses and lived experiences, as part of the normativity of heterosexuality and gender division. Indeed, participants mentioned how they struggle to adjust to gender expectations, and how they experience a constant scrutiny of their gender and sexual behaviours.

Governability and normativity are nowadays popularised arguments to explain Colombian conflicts. Giacomo Criscione (2011) uses Foucault's concept of biopolitics and Agamben's "state of exception" to discuss recent government policies in Colombia that, though intending to provide

security for its citizens, can potentially lead to death. He argues that extra-judicial killings are functional for eliminating, disciplining and normalising subjects; they are part of a particular technology of governing populations, based on the administration of death. Social cleansing is a death practice that produces effects on many subjects based on the elimination of "negative others," such as homeless people or homosexuals. Such effects are meant to produce subjects who are functional for the system of "production/consumption/existence," characteristic of the current colonial/modern power system (Criscione 2011, p. 110).

This is a relevant analysis for this chapter, since it shows that the violence that targets marginalised homosexuals in the context of the socio-political conflict is far from being exceptional or irrational. Instead, it is functional and productive for certain social, political and economic systems. It also demonstrates how such violence does not act in isolation, but in association with the aims of other groups. The analysis identifies extrajudicial killings as implicitly part of government policy, and shows that the elimination of unwanted subjects is not the result of perpetrators acting because of fear alone.

Such an analysis considers the productive power of violence in terms of its function for social regulation. The patterns of anti-homosexual violence identified earlier are historically generative. Anti-homosexual violence does not simply function as regulation, control or discipline. It is used by socio-political agents in their struggle to produce a new social order according to their hegemonic interests.

Yet it would be reductive to explain in those terms Zoraya's and Lena's experiences of gender and sexual orders in a context powerfully affected by socio-political conflict and the presence of armed actors. It would reduce the stories that they, and other participants, shared to a tale of the imposition of gender expectations and resistance to imposition, and it would overlook the intentions behind those acts of violence. The Colombian case study suggests that anti-homosexual violence facilitates both the adjustment of long-established gender and sexual orders and the emergence of new ones.

Colombia has experienced multiple *partial* transitions from conflict to post-conflict situations. The Caribbean region, for example, has lived through a period of opening up to international markets that has reshaped its social, political and economic landscape. With the idea of making the region more attractive to national and international tourism, security policies have been reinforced.

The result of this transition is the co-existence of several social orders at the same time. Participants felt that death squads committed extrajudicial killings in order to make the region more attractive to tourism and to facilitate the selling of key areas to national and international housing markets. Lena remembered that the bar where she and her partner were asked to leave for kissing is at the same time promoted as the most modern, alternative and attractive for international tourism. Victor is a HIV educator and gay activist, living in Santa Marta. He mentioned that since tourists arrive during specific periods of the year, migrant sex workers come into conflict with local sex workers. What police see as the increasing insecurity caused by *travestis* is actually the result of the opening of the cities to international tourist markets promoted by development policies.

Different gender and sexual orders co-exist, and they are caught between the desire to adhere to tradition and the need to adjust to changing economic and political contexts. Gender and sexual diversity maybe accepted and even promoted for international tourism, but controlled in local populations. It is sexual policing for economic and productive purposes. Gender and sexual orders too are affected by the growing internationalisation of the region, but their results are distributed unequally.

Similarly, the elements in interaction and the quality of interactions vary for different participants. Lena explained that not only is their relationship a source of shame for her girlfriend's family, but it also affects chances of social mobility and can fracture family networks. Being perceived as a foreigner, Lena has some room to manoeuvre with regard to what is expected from her as a woman. Internal colonialism also carries its own gender and sexual orders, and she has some space to navigate between them. Her story shows the tension between tradition and adjustment to new contexts as gender and sexual orders interact.

Internationalism and migration appeared in other narratives. Edward, another participant in the study, described how his relationship to a foreigner, his activism and his becoming a well-known political figure reinforced his coming out as a gay man. LGBT activism has been the opportunity for social mobility that his class condition or educational level did not facilitate. Zoraya moved extensively because of work opportunities and forced displacement, exposing herself to different sexual and gender cultures. In her travels, she constantly negotiated between her desire and what she was allowed to do in particular situations. Their stories have in common movements and displacements of gender and sexual relations due to their struggles for change.

The patterns of struggle differ along gender lines. Women participants mentioned that fulfilling gender expectations was a way to avoid violence. That fulfilment included embodiment and productivity. For Lena and her partner, getting a job and being economically independent has been a way to gain some respect for their relationship, and to show that they are fulfilling what is expected of them in the transition to adulthood. Not showing signs of disorder in their daily life and doing some social work prove they can contribute to their community. Zoraya had to show to the armed groups and their allies that she was a good worker, a *mujer de su casa* (home girl), who not only had a job but also did not cause scandals like other transwomen.

Pressures regarding decency or search for respect did not appear in the men's descriptions of their gender and sexual experiences. Gay men described changes in the public presence of homosexuality in terms of advancement, suggesting they might be obtaining some (limited) benefits from the identity and recognition politics that are arriving in the region. Internationalism and open markets seem to offer them more widows of opportunities.

The other side of the pressure to prove oneself productive involves avoiding excess. This pressure is common to women and men but is also differentiated by gender. Nadia explained how she passes as "toda una mujer" (wholly a woman) on the streets, because her gender expression does not call others' attention. In some approaches to gender, this would be seen as related to her gender presentation only. But she was also talking about avoiding involvement with people who could be seen as causing trouble. Lena expressed the same idea when she explained how they avoid any sign of *chirretiarse*, a slang term also used to describe those who use drugs or alcohol excessively. Young gay men mentioned that in order to interact with authorities and move within local politics, they used gayness productively and carefully so as not to create negative reactions.

Some men described this pressure for productivity as an attempt to approach a hegemonic masculinity, erasing signs of effeminacy and promiscuity associated with being homosexual. In the words of Oscar, another participant, this was done by being *serio* (acting straight) and responsible.

All the participants mentioned how the presence of *paramilitares* and death squads has affected everyday life in the communities where they live, with repercussions in different aspects of their lives. Information from *Noche y Niebla* showed how the application of codes of behaviour was part of the territorial expansion of *paramilitares*. Legal and illegal armed

groups have played a significant role in reshaping gender and sexual orders in the region, especially when they are embedded in local politics.

The state is also redefining its relationship to citizens through new policies. Local bureaucracies not only implement national policies, but also translate them into everyday practices and into the logic of local politics. Several interviewees described the new spaces for participation and recognition that did not exist before. The support provided by local authorities to gay pride events or to *reinados* (beauty pageants) of transwomen was mentioned as a step forward. Considering the history of neglect by state authorities and the violence exercised by the police, it is reasonable for participants to interpret these as advances, although there is also a limit to such recognition. Gays or *travestis* are included within the context of *reinados* and carnival events. Thus, their claims for recognition are reduced to a spectacle of state-sponsored diversity, while other subjects, such as lesbians, are kept invisible.

The story shared by Carolina and Jorge shows the ambivalences created at the local levels of bureaucracy by new legal frames. As public employees, they have to implement policies of inclusion that were designed without their input. Policies continue to be designed at central levels of government and they reflect geographical, racial and class distances. Faced with a requirement to include LGBT people in the implementation of policies, Carolina and Jorge take the "I accept but I don't understand" approach. To make sense of the situation, they interpret gayness as a matter of class—something they have seen in privileged classes, but not in working class local communities. They represent gayness as a kind of alien experience, and thus reveal how distant the official logic of inclusion is from the subjects being addressed. On the other hand, these centralised powers come from a long tradition in which citizens are seen as users of the services public employees administer. As managers of these services, they have had the power in their hands. Now that the idea of civil rights transfers some power to the citizens, that power seems to be at risk.

Citizens are also redefining their relationship to the state. Edward's career as an activist is regulated by the spaces created by the state. His social mobility and activism has been facilitated by taking informal education on human rights provided by state institutions. In his case, the state shapes his claims through a literacy on the language of rights. Nadia has lived all her life at the margins of the state and has learnt not to expect much from it. Not even from the legal system that dismissed the physical violence she faced as *problemas de maricas* (faggots' issues). In her case,

the state is not the space for her claims. She does not use the language of rights promoted by the activists, but rather the language of favours, reproduced by bureaucracies and local power holders. Currently, both are using channels provided by the state: Edward is using the mechanisms of "participation" and "representation" implemented as part of democratisation processes, while Nadia is using the mechanisms of *ayudas* (support) provided by post-conflict compensation laws and administered by local bureaucracies as gifts. They are living under a hybrid state that sometimes acts as a providing patriarch, and sometimes forces people to self-administer their claims under the idea of civil society participation.

In this process, they are learning to understand their experiences of violence in new terms. Nadia is learning to retell her life story as a *desplazada* (displaced person) and to identify milestones of discrimination in order to explain the injustices she has faced. In another situation, she and her activist friends might explain those injustices in a broader framework of state-legitimated inequalities. Now, they have to look at themselves as a "minority," excluded for their sexuality or gender identity and defined by a particular experience of violence.

Some participants described as an advance the fact that local authorities support initiatives to include *reinados transformistas* (drag queen beauty pageants) in important local festivities. These changes too can be seen as the reshaping of past ways of looking at gender, now integrated in a framework of inclusion, participation and state-sponsored diversity. In this framework, marginalised groups are transformed into minorities which have to compete for limited resources, and which are sometimes blamed for not using them. As Carolina and Jorge mentioned, if people do not participate in the spaces created by the state, they cannot claim they have not had the chance to change their situations of oppression and exclusion.

This becomes a tricky game for marginalised groups. These stories show how the state fractures social mobilisations and resistance by distributing scarce resources and offering limited recognition. What on the one hand is a claim for dignity, on the other hand becomes participation at events that are a display of the state's diversity and inclusion policies.

Synthesis

Since the 1990s, Colombia has lived a complex process of reshaping the state, resulting from the increased influence in public administration of non-state actors such as left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitaries and

drug barons. This pattern of government has combined private violent coercion with control of public resources, restrictions on public life and alliances between political, economic and social elites. It was supported by an authoritarian project of change and the fast social mobility secured by drug dealing. As in other places in Latin America, state terror and para-institutional violence targeted not only the political opposition, but also anyone who adopted stances or belonged to a group that challenged the existing social, political and economic order. *Parapolitica* was the term created in Colombia to explain the connection between paramilitarism and national and local politics.

In Colombia, gender and sexual policies imposed by armed groups, particularly by *paramilitares,* to regulate the lives of women and men in areas in dispute, can be seen as a kind of sexual para-politics. Those politics are rooted in forms of socio-political violence, which originated decades ago and were reorganised under new economic and political projects of elites supported by *paramilitares.*

The pattern of sexual para-politics has changed over time, and has transformed the everyday life of communities in both war and non-war zones. Some participants remember a constant state of siege that became part of daily life in their own social sectors. At the same time, life narratives show both experiences of victimisation and strategies of survival. This is dramatised in Zoraya's story, who, under threats by *paramilitares,* decided to face them and negotiated a temporary space of protection. It is, nonetheless, risky to see these strategies in isolation. That could lead to the impression that people are rebels with the power to overcome the use of violence by armed groups and the effects of structural violence.

The concept of sexual para-politics names the interactions between socio-political violence and the gender and sexual orders described above, and the way those interactions affect the lives of participants. The alliance between *paramilitares* and politicians was not only a project of economic control and territorial expansion through violence, but also a political project of "re-founding the nation" (López 2010). Gender and sexual violence were not just collateral damage of that project, but were at its core. What has been described until now as anti-homosexual violence is part of sexual politics intended to reshape the economic, political, cultural and social landscape of the country through armed violence and terror.

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Homophobia in Apartheid and Post-apartheid South Africa

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the uses of anti-homosexual violence during apartheid in South Africa. The chapter begins with the ambivalence caused by asking how apartheid used anti-homosexual violence. Sexuality, anti-homosexual violence and apartheid were intrinsically connected. Criminalisation of homosexuality was a key element of the sexual policies enforced by apartheid.

In a regime that was patriarchal, militaristic and based on rigid gender and sexual orders, it was impossible to leave homophobia out of the analysis. However, understanding the way in which that connection was made, by whom and for what purposes, requires a detailed discussion.

For the sake of this argument, this chapter is organised in six sections. The first one offers some background information to explain how apartheid regulated multiple aspects of the lives of South Africans through a complex system of laws and policies. Gender and sexuality were key elements in such regulation. Following literature on the topic, the second section develops the idea that homophobia reinforced militarised masculinities in a militarised society such as South Africa was at that time. Yet, apartheid deployed a selective use of homophobia rationalised to fit its interests. The three subsequent parts explore how the selective use of anti-homosexual violence changes when explored from racial, gender and

sexual perspectives. The chapter ends with the contradictions faced when apartheid was abolished during the transition to democracy.

CONTEXT

Apartheid was a system of racial segregation enacted by the National Party between 1948 and 1994 in South Africa. The National Party represented an idea of nationalism modelled upon the German National Socialism of the 1930s (Conway 2008). The system was a continuation of the racial order imposed by the colonial process that gave shape to the nation. As a discriminatory system, it created privileges for some populations (mainly "white") at the expense of the exploitation of others ("black" and "coloured" people). Forced removal, under laws such as the Group Areas Act (1950) and the Native Act (1952), took control of lands, reshaped geography and regulated mobility.

Almost simultaneous to its institutionalisation, national campaigns of resistance to apartheid began. They were based on previous organisational activities, such as the African People Organisation (APO 1906) and the African National Congress (ANC 1912). Anti-apartheid initiatives took multiple forms. From everyday actions of rebellion such as boycotts and rallies through the creation of plural and organised resistance organisations to uprisings involving complete communities. Armed resistance, clandestine actions and underground resistance were also created. In 1961, an armed branch of the ANC, the Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) was launched, incorporating guerrilla warfare strategies in the anti-apartheid struggle.

International pressure to end apartheid began in the early 1960s. Pressure was expressed through political and cultural isolation, and economic sanctions. In 1962, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution deeming apartheid a violation of South Africa's international commitments. South African delegates faced boycotts to participate in academic, artistic and sports events. Although it is questionable how effective international pressure was to end apartheid, it created awareness and mobilised public opinion at the very least.

The apartheid regime responded to resistance with increasingly repressive measures. The Terrorist Act (1967) facilitated persecution, detention policies and gave state forces extensive powers to commit multiple human rights violations. Those measures were applied differently for black and white resisters and for men and women (Goldblatt and Meintjes 1996). In 1973, the *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* (AWB, Afrikaner Resistance

Movement) was created by Eugène Terre'Blanche as a separatist paramilitary organisation.

By the second half of the 1970s, new political and military rhetoric emerged. The South African government established the Total Strategy policy, a strategy that implied more repression of civilians and legitimised the use of "dirty tricks" to diminish the power of anti-apartheid struggles. With intensive restriction of basic human rights, violent uprisings increased. The Total Strategy was the opposite of Total Onslaught, the name given by the state to what it perceived as menaces, threats and conspiracies to challenge the status quo. The "Third Force," propaganda against anti-apartheid struggles and "dirty tricks" such as stigmatisation of opposition or the spreading of false information, became part of the counter-insurgency strategies supported in the Total Strategy policy (Potgieter 2012).

By the 1980s, South Africa was a highly militarised society. South African troops were deployed in townships and state control increased. Violence between the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the ANC, as well as the perpetration of atrocities sometimes supported by government security agents, blurred differences between resistance groups and contributed to a feeling of violence and terror (Melander 2002).

As a response, a state of emergency was declared in 1986, and a National Security Management System made up of secret police was created, expanding military power. That year, the South African Defence Force (SADF) created the Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB), an office that was later accused of numerous crimes against the anti-apartheid opposition in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). By the late 1980s, state repression ranged from legal methods such as detentions and banning of anti-apartheid organisations to extra-legal and informal repression committed through vigilantes, death squads and surrogate forces (Webster and Friedman 1989).

With increasing political uprisings, boycotts and economic sabotage, a crisis of governability was inevitable. It was a combination of internal and external pressure that created conditions for political negotiations between National Party and ANC leaders in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The economic crisis that resulted from deteriorating investment contributed to the crisis of the regime after the mid-1980s. International private lenders did not renew loans to refinance external debt, precipitating a drop in the currency value. Sectors of South African business elites pushed for broader changes. The collapse of the Soviet Union impeded using the "communist menace" as an argument to justify actions against the ANC and opposition

leaders. Years of accumulated activism made democratisation a political force and created a need for diverse sectors of society, with enough leadership in the parties involved, to bring a political transition to a head. These political transitions involved the first democratic elections (1994), the enactment of a new constitution (1996) and the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1996–2003).

Post-apartheid South Africa is often described as the simultaneity of the conquest against oppression and the result of an incorporation in market economies that has not fulfilled the promises of change offered by the transition to democracy (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006). It is also the simultaneity of pressures for the rule of law and the permanent suppression of a variety of expressions of violence and injustice. The early 1990s were a period of spillover of violence (Oakes 1988, p. 507). In that decade, violence shifted from state-supported attacks on opponents of apartheid to interethnic conflict and to social violence, sometimes classified as familial and criminal (Barbarin et al. 1998). Distrust and antagonism limited the possibilities of a democratic public sphere and reproduced gender and sexual violence (Hassim 2009). For gay and lesbian groups, this situation is translated into a disjuncture between *de jure* and *de facto* rights, since the granting of constitutional rights has not implied the end of violent acts, but their reshaping and the emergence of new ones (Mkhize et al. 2010).

SELECTIVE USES OF HOMOPHOBIA DURING APARTHEID

The question of how and if the apartheid regime used anti-homosexual violence was a permanent topic of discussion in the research that motivated this book. It caused reluctant answers among South Africans and non-South Africans who participated in this research. A common understanding was that the apartheid regime did not have an explicit or structured policy to persecute homosexuals, but at the same time the criminalisation of homosexuality was a key element of the sexual policies enforced by the apartheid regime. In a regime that was patriarchal, militaristic and based on rigid gender and sexual orders, it was impossible to ignore homophobia in the analysis.

Following this understanding, apartheid regime practices and attitudes concerning homosexuality would be ambivalent to some degree or a result of some kind of double moral standard. This section argues the opposite: anti-homosexual violence was productive for the apartheid regime to establish the sexual, gender and racial orders of the state. Because of

that, it was administered selectively and for different purposes. Thus, anti-homosexual violence, more than an issue of broad discrimination based on sexual orientation or the result of moral prejudice, was a form of violence used to fragment and segregate South African society.

This argument will be explored in the next sections: first, looking at forms of anti-homosexual violence; then, discussing the place of homophobia in the apartheid gender and sexual orders.

Homophobia and anti-homosexual violence during apartheid is documented in the gay press of the time. The gay press reflected concerns and topics of relevance for its readers. As historic documents, gay press publications do not have the same characteristics as human rights data bases consulted in Colombia. Still, they offer information of relevance for the understanding of homophobic practices.

Link/Skakel and *Exit,* two gay newspapers consulted in this research, offer a variety of examples of anti-homosexual violence to examine how apartheid concerns with male sexuality were evinced in daily interactions. These are sometimes reported as a specific criminal activity; for example, the robbery and killing of a gay man in his flat. At other times, however, they describe the event as a broad pattern of victimisation, such as "gay bashing." Descriptions of gay bashing include forms of victimisation such as harassment in cruising places or assault that, in other cases, might be described without reference to the gay element. Frontiers between forms of victimisation were often blurred. References to police harassment might be mentioned in cases of police raids on gay venues or cruising places. But "police harassment" could also be mixed with "gay bashing" and assaults by perpetrators that claimed, perhaps falsely, to be police members.

Almost from the first issue of *Link/Skakel* and through all the different issues of *Exit*, cases of robbery, mugging, extortion and assassination were recorded. The information provided does not allow quantification of events or identification of patterns by year or type of crime, but it does allow us to understand how victims reacted and to explore the ways in which perpetrators were defined and explained.

An early article in *Link/Skakel* (issue 0107, November 1982) calls attention to the presence of a mugger in the cruising areas of Johannesburg. Once the "mugger" agrees to see his victims in their homes, he produces a gun and threatens to shoot them. The article mentions the abundance of such criminals who are sure that their victims will not report to the police. Other articles describe perpetrators showing a security badge in order to rob their victims or declaring that the victims made "homosexual

advances" to justify the crimes. Being "in the closet" was argued as the reason why the victims preferred to endure violence, rather than testify in court.

Issue 28 (April/May 1988) of *Link/Skakel* has a front-page report on the killing of the previous president of the Gay Association of South Africa (GASA), James Willet-Clarke. James (52 years old) was found strangled in his flat in Pretoria. Three men between 21 and 22 years old were arrested after a few days. James's car and other belongings stolen from his flat were recovered. The same issue reports another case on page 3. An 18-year-old man kicked and strangled a Johannesburg attorney who "wanted to force gay sex on him." The perpetrator met the victim in a park, went to his place for drinks and something to eat, whereupon the victim "grabbed" him and asked for sex. The young man was also found guilty of robbery. Three similar cases were reported in issues of *Exit* in 1992, 1993 and 1998. This pattern of victimisation is similar to gay killings described by Stephen Tomsen (2009) in Australia. The similarities pertain not only to the modus operandi, but also to the justification of the crimes.

Some of these events of anti-homosexual violence are related to raids and surveillance of gay venues. A letter from the readers published in *Link/Skakel* (issue 0104, August 1982) mentions the "unwarranted visit" of a police squad to a gay travel agency. The note does not give details on the event, but calls attention on the unnecessary "raiding" of a travel agency that is "sending gays on holidays." The argument used by the police seemed to be an advertisement of a gay activity, something that may have come under the control of the censorship laws at the time. For the author, if the agency is advertising their services for a gay public, that should be their prerogative in a country that promotes free enterprise.

The representation of the experiences of anti-homosexual violence changed over time and adjusted to new contexts in the examined newspapers. Gay bashing appears as an important matter to be reported in *Link/Skakel* and *Exit* throughout the period explored, but the occurrence is represented differently in three stages. In the first stage, the negative consequences of gay bashing are used to promote self-control of behaviour. In the second, it is used as a way to stimulate awareness, preparation and organisation. In the third, it becomes a topic of discussion with authorities in order to work together to resolve the problem. The first corresponds to the mid-1980s, and the fear of state authoritarianism and the early stages

of broad activism; the second is simultaneous with the first Pride Parades and the sense of agency created by these; and the third is concerned with the transition to democracy, the inclusion of sexual orientation in the new Constitution and the idea of state protection of rights.

There is a broader contextual element underlying these notes. They reflect a concern with violence and security that would become a significant matter in South African society after the end of apartheid in the transition to democracy and continuing up to the present time (Isima 2009; Mandel 2001). Two editorial notes in *Exit* (issue 49, 1991; issue 58, November/December 1992) discussed an increasing atmosphere of violence that affects South Africa. The first article, "Violence and Danger," stated that violence is a cancer that is destroying South African society. Heterosexual men and women, gays and lesbians, and children are assaulted daily. "Although there is hope, we live in dangerous times," is one of the conclusions. In a "less restrictive" moral climate, homosexuals would not need to meet in dangerous places, states the article and mentions examples like the killings of homosexuals in cruising places such as Emmarentia Dam. Such situations can still arise, it continues, so it is better to "be prepared to defend yourself." The second editorial in issue 58 follows the same line. "Exercise your rights, be aware of what they are. But be very, very careful," is the advice given to the readers.

The feeling of violence as a broad illness affecting all of South African society goes hand in hand with the increase of private companies providing security services and the securitisation of everyday life of South Africans (Isima 2009; Williams and Abrahamsen 2007). References to this are common and they anticipate the advertisement of private security services in further issues of *Exit*. Issue 64 (1994, page 3) uses a full page advertisement to show the services of a security company with the slogan "The only thing you need to employ us is money." Fully armed white men with different technologies promise the most professional security services. If it is professional the cost does not matter, explains the advertisement.

Another broader element in the understanding of these events is the arrival of the discourse of rights. By the mid-1990s, the approach to gay bashing had changed. The promise of change announced in the early 1990s was leading to real effects, such as legal changes. The spirit of "rights," the inclusion of sexual orientation in the new constitution and the declaration of sodomy laws as unconstitutional were reflected in the way that *Exit* reported on gay bashing. A cartoon published in issue 75 (1996, page 9) summarised that spirit. In it, a man wearing

earrings, with a well-groomed haircut, wearing what looks like a white T-shirt and jeans, with his hand on his hips tells another man "… and the new constitution forbids you to bash me!" The other man is taller, with short hair, has a scar on his face, a tattoo on his legs and wears a shirt, shorts and working boots. He is also holding a rough wooden bat with a nail through its top. Masculinities continue to embody national transformations.

"Bashed," the headline in issue 70 (1995), offers a more articulated explanation of such a change. As mentioned before, it starts with a reference to the increment of cases of gay bashing and the reluctance of victims to report them. It also explains that despite government and legal changes and the promise of protection, "homophobic violence" continues in South Africa. This article is significant because it is one of the first references to bashing affecting women and to the "rape of lesbians" in townships. It also explains racial and class differences. It quotes a white lesbian who considers that homophobic violence is the action of "frustrated, unemployed men." She implies that the perpetrators are white by mentioning that if, in the new South Africa, "they are not supposed to beat up kaffirs anymore, they'll beat up gays and lesbians instead" (p. 8). Gays and lesbians seem to be the new victims of post-apartheid violence.

A new kind of activism was developed in the transition to democracy and in post-apartheid South Africa. It initiates a legal language of rights, legal protection and equality. An article signed by Zackie Achmat, published in issue 84 of *Exit* (February 1997), exemplifies this change. In the article, the attack suffered by a couple of lesbian mothers and their children by a man who promised to "wipe out lesbians" from Carletonville is now framed in terms of bigotry and unlawful actions by the police. The author, a leader of the national Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality, describes the case as possibly the first one to use the courts to "fight hate crimes against lesbians and gays." The lack of adequate response by the police is interpreted as based on homophobia. The rhetoric of "hate crime" emerged in the late 1990s as a new way to describe violent actions that were no longer to be explained by the risks taken by gay men in "camping" activities, but rather the result of bigotry, the frustrations of impoverished men and the homophobia of certain sectors of society. In post-apartheid South Africa, the promise of change was fragile. This information, more than documenting the permanence or persistence of certain forms of violence, shows the battles and disputes around the understanding of victimisation and the ways to transform it.

Masculinities and the Nation

Gender and sexuality was an important area of concern for colonial South Africa and for the apartheid regime. Legislations on sexuality resulted from a long history of producing gender and race as part of the colonial process that shaped South Africa. In a history of the colonisation of Natal, Robert Morrell (2001) shows how hegemonic masculinity in the ruling classes was reinforced by a sense of belonging to schools, sports, clubs, military organisations and male control of inheritance. Such masculinity created the conditions for a sense of identity that was pivotal for the logic of inclusion and segregation at the core of apartheid. Thembisa Waetjen (2004) argues that masculinity was transformed in Zulu groups during the nineteenth century, as they changed from an agrarian patriarchy to a patriarchy incorporated in the capitalistic economy of South Africa. Later, it was again transformed into the militaristic and war-oriented masculinity that would characterise a party such as the IFP.

Apartheid reshaped gender relations in black and white communities. The Immorality Act (1927) made sexual relationships between Europeans and natives illegal. While it was assumed that the first were "white" and the later "black," such divisions did not cover the complexity of racial interactions. In 1950, the Immorality Act was modified to include "coloured" populations and to replace the term "natives" for "non-Europeans" (Ratele 2009).

With the development of apartheid, concerns about sexuality also increased and became specialised. In 1957, a reform of the Immorality Act expanded the types of sexual behaviour considered illegal and punishable to include "soliciting," sexual relations with a person with mental disabilities and prostitution. Under apartheid, sodomy was a common law offence, dating from Roman Dutch proscriptions (Botha and Cameron 1993). Homosexuality became a danger to (white) youth in the moral panics of the 1960s. In 1966, police discovery of a gay subculture in Johannesburg led to new legal changes. In 1969, Act 57, another modification to the Immorality Act, included new sexual crimes, such as the manufacture and selling of sexual toys, and augmented the punishment for male homosexuality.

Material collected from gay newspapers can be read as the effects of white men's concern with their sexualities. News about gay bashing, extortion and assault by men claiming to be police suggests the presence of social spaces in which some men could take advantage of the criminalisation of homosexuality and fear of police. These newspapers also

described the presence of police, their control of everyday life routines and the opportunities police had to abuse power. They also show acknowledgement by homosexual men of the legal risks of their behaviour and the problematic balance between recognising their sexuality as subjected to persecution and denouncing an illegal act to the authorities whose duty was to protect them.

Legal traps facilitated the actions of those doing the regime's dirty work; for example, police required complaints in order to act, but making a complaint would expose victims to legal action. Placing responsibility for denouncing onto the victims in a situation in which they could also become the offenders, not only facilitated impunity, but it also created a blurred space between legality and illegality that was used by criminality. There were enough reasons to cause concern.

Anxieties were not just on the side of homosexual men. Moral panics regarding sexualities in general, and particularly white male sexualities, were strategic in a system based on militarism and the use of young men in the armed forces. Apartheid was based on the idea that the country was under constant siege and in need of keeping its respectability, "purity" and moral cohesion (Retief 1995). In that context, homosexuality or gender non-conformity in white males was not simply an illness or a moral problem, but a threat to the nation.

This concern with purity, moral cohesion and young male sexuality would explain why it was precisely in the army, where a more explicit use of anti-homosexual violence was found. The use of "aversion therapy" in the army has been shown as proof of human rights abuses against gays and lesbians committed by health personnel in the SADF (van Zyl et al. 1999). Those abuses were committed to "cure" them of homosexuality and included the use of electroshock, chemical substances and compulsory psychological therapy and had long-lasting physical and psychological effects. Patients were not given adequate information about the consequences of their treatment, or were coerced into accepting treatment (van Zyl et al. 1999, p. 75). Following some references regarding aversion therapy made during the TRC, the issue became a focus of research and also an important attempt to recreate memory and denounce abuse against South African gays and lesbians.

It is however a matter of debate how extensive the use of aversion therapy really was. Its use got most of its visibility during the TRC hearings and in association with the work of a psychiatrist, highly ranked in the military. Information quoted in the research on aversion therapy and

found in the Collection A01 Gays in the Apartheid Military in the South African History Archive show that there were official guidelines, which saw homosexuality as a problem. Homosexuality was related to permissiveness in society and was seen as undermining military discipline, or as a factor that facilitated extortion (van Zyl et al. 1999, p. 55). One of those documents was signed in 1982, before the declaration of the state of emergency and during a time of increasing violence. With increasing militarisation, norms relating to sexuality became more restrictive. It is notable that therapies to convert homosexuals to heterosexuality were still used in the SADF, years after homosexuality ceased to be considered a mental disorder internationally. Though there are different opinions about the extent of such practices, it is generally agreed that the apartheid regime allowed them to happen.

Since such practices were also associated with the treatment of drug users, gays, soldiers with traumatic experiences, alcoholics, persons with clinical disorders and those who resisted military actions, it cannot be seen as an isolated event of state homophobia, but as a policy to normalise diversion from militarism. In other words, as an attempt to maintain a sense of normality free from those social threats.

There was a productive rationale there; homophobia is a common way to create solidarity in the armed forces and to reinforce militarised masculinities in a militarised society like South Africa was in the 1980s. Yet, only selective homophobia was rational for the productive needs of warfare. During the period of universal conscription, homosexuality was a cause of disqualification from the Permanent Forces, but not from being National Servicemen (van Zyl et al. 1999, p. 55). Rejecting white young men for being gay would be a waste of resources considering the pragmatic needs of a war conducted by a white minority. Therefore, that would explain the development and promotion of therapeutic measures and only the application of police prosecution.

Homosexuality as a stigma was used by pro-apartheid supporters and the regime to affect anti-apartheid actions. There is extensive archival material showing how pro-apartheid propaganda used anti-homosexual accusations as a political strategy. A collection in the Historical Papers Archive entitled Anti-ECC and disinformation material (1985–1988) offers extensive documentation in which gender and sexuality are used to stigmatise the End Conscription Campaign (ECC). In leaflets and bulletins produced by an organisation named Veterans for Victory to discredit the intentions of ECC, the homosexuality of their members and their

"gender confusion" is mentioned. The same bulletins show pictures of proud families sending their sons to the army, heterosexual couples and young men joining the army with titles such as The Boy Becomes a Man.

Daniel Conway (2008) argues that stigmatisation of objectors' sexual identities was an effective strategy of the state to restrain peace movements. This use of homosexuality to fracture peace and student mobilisation was mentioned in several interviews. A friend of Ivan Toms, a doctor who was on trial for refusing to do his military service, remembered how his homosexuality was made public on graffiti and leaflets at the time of his prosecution. Homosexuality was a frequent matter of discussion for the End Conscription Campaign, since it affected its political project. The young men who might be interested in the ECC would think twice about joining if it was associated with homosexuality.

Participants who had experiences in student mobilisations remember the presence of gays and lesbians in student organisations and their anxiety regarding the effects that their sexual identity would have on their campaigns. In a situation in which student activism was under close surveillance by the regime, their concern with secrecy and security is understandable. Dawie was involved in anti-apartheid student organisations when he was studying at the University of Pretoria and at Stellenbosch University. Both universities were known for attracting mainly Afrikaner students during apartheid. He remembers that those campuses were very white and apartheid driven. His participation in such organisations was a mixture of fear, discussions, excitement and silences. The meetings of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) occurred late at night, sometimes in hidden places and with severe concerns about security. Security policies made everyone in the activism environment quite paranoid, Dawie declared. One time, they had to travel for more than six hours for a meeting, including taking an aeroplane and two different cars. Discussions inside the organisation were very ideological. Economic and political liberation were the main topic. Sexuality was a taboo topic in those discussions. Dawie remembers that gay identity was seen as a very Western issue. Secrecy and silence was a requirement for student activism.

The use of the discourse of homophobia as stigmatisation can be seen as proof of the heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity imposed by the state and the military. For that reason, objectors were stigmatised for their opposition to conscription, not simply because they were gay or lesbian (Conway 2008, p. 436). In this sense, it is not sexual behaviour

or sexual identity in themselves that were under discussion, but the perception of possible fractures and internal contradictions in the apartheid regime. Male homosexuality was a threat to the young political body. Homosexuality as a stigma signalled the presence of an internal other, a naïve, susceptible and resistant-to-become-adult subject. Since going to the army was sign of coming to age as a white male, resistance to conscription was seen as perpetuating a state of adolescence.

It was not just a matter of stigma against homosexuality. The use of gender and sexual politics to frame the debate around conscription is remarkable. A pamphlet produced by the same organisation to justify action against anti-apartheid struggles was entitled, "The Rape of Peace." In it, peace is represented in a feminised position and in need of protection by (white) men. At the same time, opposition to apartheid is pictured as a (heterosexual) male devouring the precious good of peace. Another anti-ECC leaflet stated, "ECC does it from behind," sending a message of deviance and suggesting an association with sodomy. In both examples, positioning the issue in a male realm represents the problem as a dispute among males and masculinities.

Even more, stigma on male sexualities was administered selectively. Gerard, a participant in this research, remembered that there were at least three gay men in the NUSAS leadership. Despite the interest of the regime in containing the power of student mobilisations and the penalisation of homosexuality, sexual orientation was not used as a reason to prosecute them. In Gerald's view, the fact that they were sons of politicians would have created a problematic situation if it were used against student activists from privileged white families. This selective use of the accusation of homosexuality resulted from previous privileges of class and race. Permitting homosexual practices for some people that would be prosecuted for others reproduced those privileges.

These concerns with male sexuality, particularly young white male sexuality, would confirm an argument presented by Tamara Shefer and Kopano Ratele (2011). In a study of the narratives of the experience of apartheid, they argue that, even though the main goal of apartheid was to make white males dominant, those same men were troubled by the sex laws imposed by the regime and therefore the need for constant disciplining of their sexual desires. Stigma and discipline act in interconnection.

There was an additional effect. With the focus on male sexuality, women's participation in the struggles was diminished, reproducing a male order in opposition to apartheid. Even if understood as a matter of stigma

on male homosexuality, just looking at that aspect ignores the results of the selective uses of homophobia on the gender and sexual order.

Gendered and Racialised Homophobia

Tamara Shefer and Kopano Ratele have argued that the sexualisation of apartheid was racist and racism was sexualised (2011). Apartheid took control of sex and bodies to create a racialised space and to define positions of privilege and hierarchy as much as the space for deviance. Thus, the notion of "immorality" that was the basis for legal measures such as the Immorality Act was more a concept about racial relations than unaccepted behaviours (Ratele 2009, p. 294).

Racist sexualisation used sexual regulations for racist purposes. Arrests and prosecution for male-male sexual offences were enforced selectively in the different races. The importance of concerns about victimisation based on sexual orientation in the white gay press, explored in the previous section, contrasted with other sources of information. In 1992, for example, 83 per cent of the persons convicted for sodomy and "unnatural sexual offences" were classified as non-white. In the same year, the success rate for sodomy prosecutions involving accused white people was higher than when there was a non-white male involved. For Botha and Cameron, this suggests two parallel tendencies: prosecutions that involved a white male were followed with greater zeal; at the same time, there was more police harassment against non-white men, which accounts for the higher number of cases involving them.

Racialised uses of anti-homosexual violence can be also identified in the narrative of Simon Nkoli about his detention (1995). Nkoli, an anti-apartheid and gay activist, was detained with 21 other members of the United Democratic Front (1984). During his interrogation, his homosexuality was used by the police to discredit his claim to be part of the anti-apartheid struggles (Nkoli 1995). *Moffies* could not be part of the ANC, said his interrogators. Later on, when his homosexuality was made public to the other detainees, the ways in which it could be used against their cause was a matter of discussion among them and with their legal team. Nkoli's openness about his homosexuality also caused division among his comrades in prison.

If in some cases there was more concern about white male homosexuality, in others there was little. Glen Elder (1995) argues that while there was state scrutiny of middle-class white male homosexuality, black male

homosexuality in mines was perceived as a necessary complement of the life conditions of the workforce. Differences on the treatment of what was described above on male offences and mine sexualities could be related to the fact that the first occurred in a mixed-race or mainly white space, while the others occurred in a mainly black space.

Divisions created by the apartheid regime normalised and silenced discussion about violence against same-sex sexualities in black communities. Participants in this research remembered that in the 1980s effeminate men were the targets of violence inside black communities because they did not follow gender divisions and mentioned how starting in the 2000s masculine women increasingly became targets of violence. When this issue was mentioned in the white gay press, it was done to reinforce a sense of vulnerability and victimisation in a "gay community" that was basically male and white. This was not only the differentiated effect of state repression of homosexuality on all sectors of the "lesbian, gay and bisexual" community as Retief (1995, p. 109) argues; instead, it was the appropriation of violence against certain subjects to benefit the political agendas of others.

From the perspective of the gay men living in townships, things were different.

Misa's Story

Misa was born in 1963 in Northern Cape. His mother was black and his father "coloured." He described himself as of mixed race and remembered being classified in the same category as his father. He remembered growing up "falling for" other boys. When he was 18 years old, he decided to become an anti-apartheid activist and then an LGBT activist. He currently works as marriage and HIV counsellor in a local hospital. His payment depends on the availability of funds to support such activities. He has a 28-year-old son and a grandson. His son knows about sexual identity.

Asked about what living as a gay man in a township was like, Misa made it clear that there is more violence nowadays than during apartheid. It does not mean that there was no violence against gay and lesbian people at that time, but the feeling is that it was safer then. In his view, that violence became worse after 2000.

This perception resembles what Irina Silber found in an anthropological study in post-war El Salvador (2005). Resistance to war gave some communities a sense of purpose and social unity. With the failing of peace promises and increasing post-conflict violence in neoliberal El

Salvador, a feeling of being worse now than before was mentioned by rural Salvadorians. His perception that it was safer before, maybe related with the rich and complex networks of alliance and solidarity created as a reaction to repressive systems—a creativity that, ironically, may be weakened with more inclusive policies.

In the 1980s, Misa came to Kwa-Thema, in part because of the spirit of freedom and activism experienced by black gay and lesbian communities in the township, and in part because his mother was born there. When he arrived, there were incidents of violence against gay men. There was, however, some understanding of who they were and some curiosity about "how could a gay man sleep with a straight one?" he said, smiling. He also remembered cruising activities and the possibilities of getting to know men in taverns and other spaces. "It was OK, you go to a place, a tavern, and a man could go and tell you, I love you, to sleep with you. They were friendly," he declared.

This description contrasts with other interviewees who considered townships very violent and homophobic places. If gay culture was mainly a feature of the white middle class in Johannesburg, it does not mean that some kind of homoerotic networks and spaces for socialisation did not exist in townships.

The big difference for Misa is that nowadays violence ends up in murder. He feels that there are more chances to be killed now than before. He mentioned cases in which gay men have been attacked in their houses by men who break in. The pattern is usually the same. Perpetrators are people known by the victims, or people who try to befriend them to get access to their spaces or to gain trust and then take advantage of the situation: "In townships there is the idea that gay men have money. There was a case of two guys who spent the night together and one was killed the other day." The fact that now violence against lesbians in townships is more visible does not mean that gay men are not being brutally murdered.

The feeling of vulnerability is reinforced by the lack of police attention, the risk of double victimisation and the stereotypes that police have about gay men: "If you go to police, they say, why didn't you fight back? You are a man, and if you say why you hadn't fought back, they would say, oh, you are one of *those*!"

Misa's narrative embodies the contradictory feelings of change and resentment that have been found by researchers for contemporary South Africa (Fassin 2008). He made it clear that "gay rights are human rights,"

or the importance of the South African Constitution as a protective framework, to support the idea that now legally, all people are equal in South Africa. Nevertheless, laws need to be enforced, and there is a lack of commitment from the current government to do so. He has witnessed how some leaders are calling on tradition and picturing homosexuality as un-African to promote violence. He fears that with the strengthening of traditional leaders, the constitution could be changed and legal protection could disappear.

On Big Picture, Small Pictures and No Room

Most of this chapter up to now has focused on men's experiences and masculinities. Women's experiences cannot be explained within the same framework. Women participants in this research described direct experiences of violence, including racial and sexual violence. Their memories of the era of apartheid revolved around their daily life experiences of violence and the way in which racial violence occupied all spaces of their lives. They were also victims of violence because of the way their gender identity was perceived in their communities. Violence related to sexual orientation or gender identity did not have a separate existence from other forms of violence. Because of the predominance of racism, "there was no room for that," Funeka remembers.

Funeka's Story

Funeka is a community and gender activist. She was born in 1960, in an area close to Cape Town, and her family are Xhosa speakers. She remembered growing up in a conservative environment in which tradition, customs and Christianity were very important. Like many black and coloured South Africans, her family suffered the effects of the Group Areas Act, a body of laws enacted in 1950 and repealed in 1991 that regulated occupation and acquisition of land in accordance with apartheid racial classifications. When she was still young, her people were removed from Cape Town to the so-called homelands in the Eastern Cape where she spent her childhood and adolescence.

Funeka was at school in the 1970s, a vibrant time for youth mobilisations in South Africa. The Soweto Uprising (16 June 1976) led by black students, was one of the pivotal moments in the anti-apartheid movement. She remembered how the violence experienced by black students made

them realise that "there was no way to run away" from the struggles. More than a voluntary decision to resist, her involvement was the result of a process of experiencing violence, researching its causes and looking for explanations. Activism was not an option taken among other possibilities, but the inevitable result of understanding who she was as a black person. At that time, she joined a youth branch of the ANC and was still actively involved with the ANC at the time of our interview.

The connections she made between her life story, structures of violence and social change can be seen in her introduction at the beginning of the interview:

> I am a lesbian activist in South Africa. I became involved in activism and politics before I became involved in gay and lesbian stuff because what we were facing before was the issue of not being accepted because of our colour. I think it was because of that, that the gay and lesbian stuff never comes to anyone's mind. There were just things that were happening. I became more involved [in gay and lesbian activism] when I was attacked. It was 1993. It was then that I started to see clearly that something was not right. We had not been focussing on sexual orientation […] When I was attacked because of my masculinity and because people started to notice that I was going out with women I started to become much more involved in fighting for the rights of gay and lesbian people. That was in the early 90s.

When talking about her initial involvement in the struggles, Funeka remembered the fight against racism as the "bigger picture" towards which all actions were supposed to be directed. In this process of making sense of her experience of racism, she described her participation in a collective consensus about racism, its causes and consequences. This collective consensus operated both as a comprehensive explanation of her position in society and as an organising principle underpinning her political development.

Political activism was the direct consequence of her reflections regarding her life experiences and it became a departure point for the new direction her life took. She was already a committed member of the ANC in the 1980s when she heard Simon Nkoli speak about being gay and fighting against apartheid, and she then realised that what he was saying resonated with her, not only as an anti-apartheid comrade, but also as a non-heterosexual black person. Her anti-apartheid comrades became involved in the construction of her identity, when they became divided in favour of or against her coming out.

Asked about her memories of cases of violence against gay and lesbian people, Funeka established two differences: her perception of her lesbianism as something different from her experience of racism and what she knew was happening in white minorities in terms of anti-homosexual violence. She remembered examples of violence in both cases, but that reaction was different in each case. Asked about hearing of violence against gay and lesbian people, Funeka said:

> I think I didn't know myself that I was gay, that I was a lesbian at that time. Because of the pressure and the tension that was there at that time, there wasn't space to think about anything else. The pressure from the system was on black people, there was no way that you would have time to react like "Ok. Yes. I am a lesbian, so what?" There was no room for that. Among white people I understand there were some activities that were happening during that time and the police were busy trying to suppress them, because at least they had that privilege to be themselves, but yeah, that was something related to that privilege [she laughs].

The consensus created by the idea of anti-apartheid struggles as the "big picture," and the way it framed her life narrative, also has cracks. That consensus created exclusion and limited what was considered relevant for activism and political action. She remembers the early years of her involvement in the struggles when there was no space to focus on other issues, such as sexual orientation. It does not mean that she was unaware of her sexuality or of the existence of anti-homosexual violence. She recalls that she felt identified with the gay and black activist Simon Nkoli, and she knew about police prosecution of white homosexuals or violence against effeminate men in Zulu or Xhosa cultures during the mid-1980s. As an organising principle, the focus on the big picture defined not only what was relevant, but also what should be forgotten:

> And we really forget about the other side of ourselves, like we are women and also we are lesbian, and I think, that is why Simon Nkoli in Johannesburg, when he, in 1985, when he told some of his comrades that he was gay and he struggled a lot because really there was no space for that at that time because people were focusing on ourselves from being free from the white people as black people.

Such consensus was relevant for her recognition of racism as a political experience, and anti-racism as an activist commitment. Yet it was fragile

due to the hierarchies of difference that it created and to the connections of racism with other forms of violence, such as gender-based violence. She explained that because of their commitment to the fight for equality, they did not expect to be discriminated against for any other reasons. What is more, she did not imagine that as lesbians and as women they would need to create structures to protect themselves from their comrades.

In the early 1990s, Funeka moved from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town. She said she went "looking for freedom," and to try to make sense of her experience of being lesbian and feeling attracted to other women. The city was not always welcoming, and between 1993 and 1995 she was the victim of two violent attacks. She was stabbed and badly injured, by the time she was dating a woman and two years later, she was gang raped. Such experiences turned her life "up and down," she said. After that, she became completely involved in gay and lesbian activism.

In 2005, another violent event would create new paths in her activism. With the visibility of violence against lesbian women and the emergence of "corrective rape" as a social and political issue, she became aware of the many forms of victimisation that women suffered, the lack of attention by state institutions and the impunity and legitimacy of such violence. Around 2007, considering the need to support the participation of lesbians in legal processes and to make them aware of their rights, she and other activists worked to create a safe space of encounter inside NGOs, working on topics such as HIV. Funeka and others sought alliances with social justice organisations and created forms of mobilisation against homophobia and violence targeting lesbian and masculine women in the townships. Working with the police was a way of reacting to their inadequate management of such cases of violence.

In that way, race, gender, sexuality and class appear in her narrative not only as a point of departure, but also as something that is achieved in constant processes of reflection, interaction and collective political participation. More than a combination of elements, what she describes is the unfolding and mutual constitution of different positions and political decisions. In the permanent unfolding she described, racial, gender and sexual violence are not only structural positions or events that inflicted suffering in her life, but also experiences that she transformed with her political activism. In such processes, she constituted her subjectivities.

The other side of this non-differentiation of violence is that violence did not separate some victims from others. Another participant, Baliswe, compared current acts of violence with those committed during apartheid

to show how, in the earlier period, the community would protect victims, because they all shared the same racist violence. She mentioned her participation in the struggles as an example of how resisting apartheid, even by violent means, created a sense of belonging to the community. Nowadays, it is the community that exercises homophobic violence against its own members.

The differentiation between direct and indirect victimisation is useful to help us understand how violence varies across social structures and how suffering was imposed on specific bodies. Such division does not, however, allow the exploration of other forms in which violence becomes a lived and embodied experience. Participants Sheila and Carrie had a long-term commitment to feminism and to the struggles of women against gender-based violence. Sheila, for example, participated in the first initiatives to deal with domestic violence in Cape Town. Carrie was part of feminist organisations years before joining "queer" organisations. The organisations in which they participated were interracial. Violence became a lived experience through the sharing of a common gender situation with other women and their commitment to transform it. It can be suggested that because of that, their approach to violence was also different, depending on sexual orientation. They have participated in initiatives to transform violence that is based on broad discussions of power relations such as class and race, divisions that do not follow the logic of identity politics.

CHANGES AND CONTINUITIES IN ANTI-HOMOSEXUAL VIOLENCE IN TRANSITIONS

Participants felt a sense of hope brought on by the end of apartheid. For some, it was the chance to be citizens for the first time, but they also examined how much of the promise of change had been implemented in the post-apartheid context. Gerald, for example, worked for one of the international donors that funded the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE), the organisation that promoted several of the legal changes related to sexual orientation. From his perspective, activists made an important contribution to ensure that homophobia became an issue in the moment of the transition and a priority in the agendas for change. Legal changes such as the Equality Clause created spaces that were not there before. The Equality Clause was the item in the post-apartheid Constitution prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. It

backed legal changes to decriminalise homosexuality and protect the rights of same-sex couples.

One reason for the scepticism about changes in the post-apartheid era is the continuance and emergence of new forms of violence. Baliswe and Misa mentioned that, since the early 2000s, they have been experiencing more violence related to gender and sexuality than before. They have heard how churches promote homophobic speech and have witnessed the use of tradition and culture as arguments to impose heterosexist and patriarchal gender and sexual orders. They have also seen the emergence of gangs targeting homosexuals and lesbians. Baliswe was friends with a woman who was killed in an act of "corrective rape." It was in the post-apartheid context that Funeka was a victim of sexual violence. Misa said that back then it would have been impossible to go home with a man one had just met in a bar, but now there was the risk of being killed after going on a date with someone.

If the transition to democracy was characterised by a positive language of rights and equality, it is in the post-apartheid state that a negative language of violence has become the focus of activism and state intervention. That seems to be the balance described by those participants with a more academic background. A variety of forms of violence begins to be connected under labels such as homophobia or corrective rape.

In the post-apartheid context, anti-homosexual violence was termed "hate crime" or "homophobia." It became a priority for the experts and a reason to demand intervention from the state. In a situation of weak institutional attention and continued institutionalised homophobia, grassroots organisations acquire new roles. Funeka described activities developed with the police to improve their capacity to respond to violence related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Dawie explained how homophobic violence has acquired prominence in the activities of the group he works for; for example, in denouncing the state's lack of attention to the cases of gay men murdered in their homes. Networks of associations have been created to deal with the issue, and to promote co-operation between the state and civil society. In this process, homophobia has become a marker of state failure to provide the promised protection, and to guarantee rights. At the same time, drawing attention to the issue has become a new responsibility for victims and their organisations.

Participants expressed doubts regarding how much positive change, in terms of gender and sexuality, has been delivered in the transition to democracy, for whom and in which aspects. Gender and sexual violence

was mentioned to prove there were continuing inequalities and to high-light the emergence of unexpected forms of violence. Funeka and Baliswe mentioned corrective rape of lesbians as an example of how gender and sexual violence has not disappeared but increased in post-apartheid. They mentioned how it is a really important factor for women in their com-munities, and connected it with increasing nationalistic and xenophobic discourses.

Still, corrective rape was also a contested term. Carrie, a feminist and women's rights activist, criticised the way in which the term had been popularised, reproducing stereotypes about black women and misrepre-senting the causes of gender-based violence. From her feminist practice, she also drew attention to the way in which the term creates divisions in the experience of violence against women. Reducing the issue to a matter of sexual orientation fragments the understanding of the power relations that support gender violence. As Funeka put it, it is a way to "mess with people." This argument would imply that the intention to denounce a new form of violence actually weakens the possibilities for women's collective action. It corresponds with current debates regarding the language used to talk about violence against women, and how this language reproduces dehumanising vocabularies, although its intention is to create awareness, or make it public (Hames 2011).

The conception of corrective rape as a new issue is also problematic. Baliswe described an experience of violence in her community in the 1980s, in which perpetrators persecuted her for the way she was dress-ing. Funeka remembered that masculine women dating women was not a new issue, nor was the negative reaction to it. To associate corrective rape with post-apartheid South Africa made the gender and sexual violence under apartheid invisible, and, through its association with black lesbians in townships, reproduced sexual stereotypes about black communities. It created the idea that *all* black women are under constant fear, that rapists are black and that rape is only administered to control sexual orientation, as defined by some organisations (HRW 2011).

The separation of lesbians' experiences of violence from the gender and sexual violence lived by other women risks the creation of oppositions. It may also call attention on a form of violence rendering other forms invis-ible or less relevant. For example, Dawie argues that the current emphasis on corrective rape of lesbians ignores violence against effeminate black men. He mentioned research that proves the intensity of such violence. The problem here is not just the amount of violence experienced by one

or other social group. It is the classificatory logic that, intending to make visible particular forms of violence, actually contributes to the fragmentation of its understanding.

Parallel themes about masculinities can be identified in the narratives of participants. Misa's reference to feeling more at risk now when meeting a man in a bar than before, questions the idea that townships have been always hostile places to men that are attracted to the same-sex. Dawie's reference to the lack of attention to the killing of gay men in their homes recalled earlier discussions about gay bashing, and implied the continuity of some patterns of violence. In both cases the existence of circuits for male sexual interaction was described. Archival material and interviews suggest the idea of gay bashing as a case of violence between men and involving masculinities. Early descriptions of those violent interactions mention the physical characteristics of the perpetrators, such as their attractiveness, masculine appearance or working class background. It was with the transition to democracy that the race of the perpetrators started to be mentioned. The fact that this situation is discussed nowadays in terms of "young black men targeting older white men," recalls the importance of interracial circuits of desire.

Some participants mentioned the continuity of a kind of masculinity associated with the struggles and with fighting for the nation as a possible explanation of gender-based violence in the post-apartheid context. The rape trial of Jacob Zuma in 2005 was mentioned to show how extensive and legitimate gender violence is in South African society. By comparison, few references to gender-based violence in white communities or by white men were made by participants. Thokozani Xaba (2001) makes a bold claim when he argues that the "heroes" of yesterday, who participated in the anti-apartheid struggles, are today's "villains."

Synthesis

The case of South Africa evinces the problems faced in making linear and categorical divisions between forms of violence. From the perspective of the participants, those who have been direct victims of violence described the continuity of vulnerabilities and sufferings. Those who have assumed the roles of activists and promoters of social change discussed the problems involved in creating divisions in types of violence and in dealing with them separately.

Archival material showed different paths in the historical construction of anti-homosexual violence as a matter of concern in an emerging gay community that gradually came to demand action by state institutions. During the transition, the logic of single-issue actions was effective in obtaining results, but not in understanding broad power relations.

How much has changed remains a matter of debate. Sexuality, gender and violence are still closely connected in the post-apartheid regime, but the nature of the connection is not the same. In the post-apartheid era, there is widespread disbelief in the state's capacity to deliver change and yet it is to change the state that social movements are working.

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The *Chiaroscuro* of Sexual Politics

INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a framework for the analysis of anti-homosexual violence, discussing existing literature and the findings of this research project. The chapter is divided into six sections. It begins with a review to establish conceptualisations on homophobia in order to argue that most of them are insufficient to be applied directly to the understanding of anti-homosexual violence in armed conflicts. One of the reasons for that limitation is the fact that they have been developed in a no-war context, and with a direct relation to identity politics rather than the dynamics of conflicts. The second section explores recent theoretical developments that, using the concept of "political homophobia," have identified it as a key element in political transitions and conflicts. The third and fourth parts open up the discussion of the concept, showing how its purposiveness and strategic use is not always intentional. The fifth section exposes the limitations of political homophobia in understanding women's experiences of such violence. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of the potential and limits of the concept.

Homophobia: A Contested Concept

As noted in Chap. 2, anti-homosexual violence and the set of hatreds, prejudices or inequalities associated with same-sex sexualities have been considered with reference to a variety of theories. Explanations have moved from an emphasis on understanding the causes of such hatred to observing its interactions with other structures of oppression and its deployment in a variety of contexts. For this research, it is important to emphasise that most of such conceptualisations have been developed in a no-war context and with a direct relation to identity politics. This chapter calls for the need to build a theory based not only on the political uses of homophobia, but also in the challenges that protracted conflicts and political transitions face to conceptualise gender and sexual politics.

The term homophobia was coined in the late 1960s by the United States psychotherapist and writer George Weinberg, a milestone in the reflection on social attitudes towards homosexuality (Herek 2004, p. 8). Since it was first used, homophobia gradually entered academia to explain the fear and prejudice against homosexuality and homosexual people (Wickberg 2000, p. 49). At the end of the 1970s, the term was already translated and incorporated into other cultural contexts, for example, in Latin American reflections regarding the repression of homosexual behaviour (Botero 1980). As a concept, homophobia has been a political tool for activism, lobbying and the inclusion of anti-homosexual violence in public agendas.

The concept of homophobia has been political since its origin. It resulted from a search for a core problem to articulate social mobilisations and collective identities. It also originated in a particular political context. Weinberg's definition of homophobia as an incapacitating fear (Weinberg 1972, p. 8) was based on the work on prejudice conducted by the social psychologist Gordon Allport (1954). Allport based his understanding of prejudice on ethnic antagonism, focusing on the negative stereotypes associated with Jews and "Negroes." Fear about irrational personalities was part of the post-World War II (WWII) context, and oriented intellectual and academic discussions, like Gordon Allport's book on prejudice and intergroup relations. As an analytical concept, homophobia became one of the hatreds associated with same-sex sexualities, post-war concerns about prejudices, irrational fears and group interactions. Because of that, homophobia offered a political agenda that supported identity politics and actions to change homophobic society.

Even if homophobia was coined amid post-WW II fears on totalitarianism and prejudice, fear has been the key element in the concept, not social or political conflict. The fact that leading discussions on homophobia have been developed in the global North is one of the factors for the non-inclusion of political conflict in the construction of the concept. The way in which the geopolitics of conflicts has been constructed is the other factor for such invisibility.

The concept of homophobia was contested almost from the outset (Bhugra 1987; Plummer 1975). Critiques contemplated its psycho-social origin, theoretical status, political use and applicability in non-Western societies (Bryant and Vidal-Ortiz 2008; Murray 2009; Wickberg 2000). The idea of homophobia as an irrational fear has been challenged because it reduces the causes of discrimination, exclusion or violence to the sexual orientation of an individual (Ahmad and Bhugra 2010). The failure to recognise institutional and structural sources of power has been considered one of the weakest points in the way that homophobia defines its object of analysis (Wickberg 2000, p. 51).

Alternative conceptualisations located the cause of sexual prejudices in social structures. Black lesbian feminists coined the term "heterosexism" in the early 1970s to underline the connection between struggles against racial, sexual, heterosexual and class oppression, based on the intertwined analysis of those conditions in their lives (Combahee-River-Collective 1979). While homophobia was defined in terms of personality profiles, disease and antagonistic group dynamics, heterosexism was the result of power relations in the economy, society and culture. Nevertheless, the concept of heterosexism did not become as popular as homophobia did, and ended up as a means to talk about ideologies that support heterosexual privileges. The interest in race and class that was originally part of the concept contributed to an ongoing debate about interactions between systems of oppression and hierarchies of difference, leading to the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991).

Homophobia and heterosexism are oriented to explain causes of same-sex hatreds, exclusions and oppressions. Heteronormativity, a concept gaining space in Anglophone literature in recent decades, emphasises how these concepts function, and the regulatory systems that support them. The word is associated with Michael Warner (1993), though Stevi Jackson (2006) considers that the idea was already present in the work of early lesbian feminists such as Gayle Rubin or Adrienne Rich, who conceptualised

"compulsory heterosexuality" not only in terms of regulation of sexuality but also of gender relations.

Heteronormativity has been defined in different ways, yet there is no single definition of the norms, institutions or regulations that constitute it. While some authors emphasise the institutional component of the concept (Jackson 2006), others consider its regulatory elements (Chambers 2007). If heteronormativity is understood in terms of the constitutive elements of the gender/sexual order of societies, as early feminist conceptualisations did, it not only affects non-heterosexual people but also heterosexuals, since such a normative system regulates all subjects. When the emphasis is placed on the separation homo/hetero and phrased in terms of normative subjects, the result is a reading of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender men and women as a collective other. Even more, it tends to focus on a negative understanding of subject formation, as is common in post-structuralist approaches (McNay 2000).

There are recent examples of the application of heteronormativity to the analysis of conflicts (Jones 2006), and to contemporary global politics and state building (Pichardo and Ynés 2010; Pratt 1998; Puar 2007). The report on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender men and women produced by the Colombian Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (CNMH, National Centre for Historic Memory) is constructed around the concept of heteronormativity. In it, the non-heterosexuality of gay, lesbian and transgender men and women and their digression from heterosexual norm is the main explanation of their victimisation during the Colombian armed conflict (Prada et al. 2015).

These recent uses of heteronormativity to analyse political conflicts displace attention to the assumption of collective identity and collective threat that was at the base of homophobia. Still, the use of heteronormativity, as another way to describe a collective subject because of gender and sexual orientation, resembles initial conceptualisations of homophobia. Being on the other side of the heterosexual norm is assumed to be a homogeneous place. It also merges sexual orientation and gender identity on a similar cause of differentiation and inequality. It follows the attempts of identity politics to create a collective subject based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The analytical usefulness of the separation homo/hetero has been under question in the work of psychoanalysts and sociologists such as Nancy Chodorow (1994). The emphasis on non-heterosexual sexualities renders heterosexuality under-theorised or at least, unproblematic. Chodorow's

analysis, without denying the existence of normative heterosexuality or cultural gender ideals, is based on the comprehension of continuums and interactions between masculinities, femininities and sexualities (1994, p. 56). Her work not only mentions the importance of breaking the link between homosexuality and pathology, but also of exploring diversity in heterosexuality. Instead of looking at norms and how they operate in those who deviate or subvert them, Chodorow proposes the need to problematise all sexualities far from binary divisions.

In perspectives like this, anti-homosexual violence is not an isolated event but an integral part of gender and sexual orders and particularly of the regulation of masculinities (Connell 1987, 2005). The discussion presented up to now in this book emphasised the need to locate anti-homosexual violence in gender and sexual orders and not just on one side of the division, homo/heterosexuality. In that idea, homophobia and anti-homosexual violence in armed conflict is part of gender violence and not just violence based on sexuality or violence against a discrete social group.

The *Political* in Political Homophobia

Homophobia and anti-homosexual violence in political transitions have been explored in studies of liberation movements in Namibia (Currier 2010) and Southern Africa (Epprecht 2005); democratisation and Europeanisation trends in Poland (Graff 2010); and nation-building processes in Indonesia (Boellstorff 2004), Serbia (Greenberg 2006), Kosovo (Krasniqi 2007) and Croatia (Zarkov 2001). From these findings, homophobia has been identified as a key element in political struggles. Such diverse evidence also suggests that homophobia becomes political for different reasons and does not act as a unified phenomenon. Therefore, it cannot be defined as an intrinsic factor in all conflicts.

In order to explore how and why homophobia becomes political in political conflicts, three analytical strategies will be explored next. The first calls attention to the comparison between when it happens and when it does not happen. The second considers that homophobia becomes political under a variety of reasons. Those reasons revolve around its frequency, purposiveness, role in gender and sexual orders, influence of cultural factors and of transnational trends. The third explores the uses and results of political homophobia. The first and second analytical strategies will be discussed in each section, while the third will be taken in the next sections of this chapter. The two case studies selected here correspond to

two different types of conflict. In a discussion on the variations of sexual violence in armed conflicts, Elizabeth Wood (2006) calls for the need to study not only the cases in which it is used, but also the cases in which sexual violence does not happen, or happens with less impact. Information collected in South Africa would suggest that anti-homosexual violence, in terms of direct effects on individuals and as part of an intentional or strategic use by apartheid, was limited. If there was political homophobia, it was more at the level of its productive power to consolidate hegemonic masculinity and some very precise uses, such as stigmatisation of political opposition. Following that idea, South Africa would be a "negative" case for the uses of homophobic violence as a particular strategy of warfare. Conversely, Colombia would be a "positive" case, since the different parties in dispute have used it explicitly and with political intentions, as described in detail in Chap. 3.

Both cases, however, problematise such division. As several South African participants mentioned, it is not easy to say whether homophobic violence was used by the apartheid regime or not. At the same time, in Colombia it has not been used by all political sectors in the same way or at the same time. More than a "positive" or "negative" presence, anti-homosexual violence seems to operate in both cases in the *chiaroscuro* spaces created by the interactions between socio-political violence, gender and sexuality.

Another alternative is to explore the politicisation of homophobia under particular circumstances. What makes political homophobia, *political*, and therefore a key element in the comprehension of conflicts and political transitions, varies according to the emphasis made by analytical perspectives.

In relation to its frequency, for example, political homophobia was investigated initially as an exceptional event contributing to broader nationalistic purposes (Boellstorff 2004), and later as a political strategy with its own characteristics and intentions (Currier 2010). Recently, using comparative analysis, it has been considered a distinctive trend in global politics (Bosia and Weiss 2013).

Regarding purposiveness, a common idea in this literature is that political homophobia is deployed in situations of political crisis to obtain a useful result for the interests of state officials and those competing for state power. This argument distances itself from popularised ideas of homophobia as an irrational fear, or as the intolerant attitudes of individuals in power. Ashley Currier, sociologist and researcher of gender and sexual diversity

movements in Southern Africa (2010), defined political homophobia as a "gendered strategy." Michael Bosia states, political homophobia is a "choice to *do* something" (Bosia 2013, p. 51), a strategic action deployed in political practices.

Some authors also locate political homophobia in the gender and sexual orders and politics of masculinities. For example, Currier emphasises the gendered condition of political homophobia, in particular its role in achieving certain masculinity. She defines political homophobia as a strategy used by liberation movements to preserve and protect their masculinist control of the state (2010, p. 111). Since political homophobia generates political and material gains for some (masculine) groups through the exclusion of others (gender and sexual dissidents), it is a specific event in political struggles and not just a symptom of authoritarian control or failing democratisation.

Tom Boellstorff uses the concept of political homophobia to explain how a new masculinist caste reacted violently against male-male desire because it posed a threat to normative masculinity. Separating homophobia from heterosexism, the author suggests an explicatory model in which heterosexuality is pervasive, and fear and hatred of same-sex sexualities occasional, as in Southeast Asia (Boellstorff 2004, p. 472).

What remains unexplored in this location of political homophobia in gender and sexual orders is the utility of the concept to explain violence against women, not only those seen as dissidents of sexual norms. That aspect is pivotal if gender and sexual orders are defined not just as differences between men and women or between sexualities, but also as constructed in relationships.

Another common conclusion in current literature on homophobia in general, and in political homophobia in particular, is the critique of reductive or essentialist approaches to the role of culture. Scholars studying homophobia in Africa resist the definition of homophobia as an intrinsic component of African cultures and rather explore how it is used in political transitions to reinforce the patriarchy, sexism or heteronormativity required for neoconservative nationalisms and religious fundamentalism. It is in a context of new nationalism and conservative agendas that homosexuality is constructed as un-African (Msibi 2011). Marc Epprecht (2005) actually suggests that what is un-African is homophobia. In a similar argumentation, Boellstorff avoids reducing political homophobia in Islam to religious brutality and looks at the changes in masculine representations produced for a redefinition of the nation (Boellstorff 2004, p. 473).

In a similar way, scholars in masculinities in Latin America have challenged the usual association with *machismo* as the explanatory category for hegemonic masculinity and homophobia (Viveros 2003). Since homosexual behaviour is more extended in culture that admitted, reasons for political homophobia are more associated with political disputes over the public sphere, for example (De la Dehesa 2010). Still political homophobia has not been a relevant concept to explain homophobias in Latin American countries, as it has been applied to African countries.

The role of historical legacies and long-term cultural patterns in the politicisation of homophobia has also been a matter of discussion. Currier agrees with Epprecht's analysis of historical continuities in political homophobia (Epprecht 2004, 2005). She draws attention, however, to the lack of discussion on how homophobia is currently enacted with particular characteristics and consequences as defined targets (Currier 2010, p. 111).

There are similar critiques of the use of tradition as argument to explain political homophobia. Traditional institutions such as churches have had an important role in the creation of homophobic attitudes and practices, as examples in Africa and Latin America show (Freston 1998; Msibi 2011). However, Agnieszka Graff (2010) challenges the tendency to conclude a univocal association between homophobia and Catholicism, and explores how Polish nationalism revived after the country joined the European Union. In her analysis, it is that reaction that politicised homophobia.

Research also shows how political homophobia expressed in intrastate conflicts is related to transnational relations, including colonial pasts and globalisation trends. Anti-sodomy laws were exported within European colonial empires and remained in post-colonies, as examples from India and Africa show (Epprecht 2005; Nandy 2009). Those laws were part of the colonial process and intrinsic to structures of gender and sexuality required by the politics of colonisation.

Political uses of homophobia were applied in post-WWII reconstruction in the United States, where a new generation of psychoanalysts stressed the pathological nature of homosexuality and how it was necessary to reject homosexuality to safeguard morality and civilisation (Lewes 1989). Mass culture producers made the need for national security not only desirable but pleasurable for American spectators by invoking homophobic categories of Cold War political discourse (Corber 1993, p. 6). Lesbians and homosexual men were expelled from federal government agencies in the 1950s because their supposed emotional instability made

them easy targets for Soviet blackmailing and therefore national security risks. These anti-homosexual policies were exported to the Western allies of the United States and to international organisations such as the United Nations, World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Johnson 2013, p. 56).

This analytical strategy of looking at a variation of certain topics is useful to show how homophobia becomes political under a range of factors. It faces the problem of the definition and selection of those factors to make a comparison. Another strategy consists in looking at uses and results of political homophobia. Instead of searching for causes of anti-homosexual violence or the phenomenology of political homophobia, this last strategy considers the productive dimension of such violence that is at the same time the politicisation of homophobia and the homosexualisation of politics.

Who Gains with Political Homophobia?

In one of its definitions, political homophobia is seen as a strategy used by groups in struggles for political power (Bosia 2013). Not all groups in those struggles, however, have the same motivation, nor are they organised in the same way to achieve their aims or to enter into dispute with others. The information collected in Colombia shows that *paramilitares* have been the main perpetrators of such violence in the communities they attempt to control. Information about the use of anti-homosexual violence in the communities under the control of guerrillas is scarce. If they use it, it seems to be inside their own armies, as part of their military disciplining of gender and sexuality. This information is confirmed by other studies.

In spite of being located in opposite sides of the ideological spectrum, Colombian *paramilitares* seemed to have used anti-homosexual violence in a similar way as the *Partido Comunista del Perú-Sendero Luminoso* (Communist Party of Peru-Shining Path; PCP-SL). Between 1985 and 1990, the PCP-SL committed several extrajudicial killings of people defined as *indeseables* (undesirables). A woman kidnapped by the PCP-SL in San Martin told the Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) about the torture and sexual violence committed against women and homosexual men before they were killed (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003b).

By 1986, the PCP-SL had become a consolidated force, was extending its military operations, and organising the *Comités de Apoyo Popular Paralelo* (Parallel Popular Support Committees). Their role was to provide information, collect taxes, support traders and kill *malos elementos* (rotten members) (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003b, p. 261). In Ucayali, where PCP-SL was expanding its base of supporters and gaining control of drug dealing, a *Comité de Apoyo* imposed an extensive moral code. The code imposed political education, regulated the production of coca, the consumption of alcohol and forms of marriage and punished homosexuality, prostitution and robbery (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003a, p. 238). On 6 August 1986, ten "*homosexuales y prostitutas*" were assassinated in Aucayacu, a region that was one of the most affected by political violence in the 1980s (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003b, p. 261). As a result, an unspecified number of gays and *travestis* left the area (Montalvo 2006, p. 10).

In Peru, these events were made public. Sometimes, communities justified the actions. On 12 September 1988, journalists in Pucallpa were called to witness how members of the PCP-SL killed eight women and men accused of being "*fumones, cabros y prostis*" (drug users, faggots and prostitutes) (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003b, p. 292).

In terms of anti-homosexual violence committed by state actors during armed conflicts, the case of Peru provides relevant information again. Lesbian women, homosexual men and *travesti*s were also victims of detention and extrajudicial killings committed by state agents or armed groups associated with them. In 1987, when conflict was escalating and state use of force became stronger, a lesbian bar in Lima was raided by police (Dorf and Careaga 1995). Television cameras were present in the raid and broadcast the operation in the news. Many of the women lost their jobs, some were beaten by their families and at least two were raped after leaving the police station. Despite the fact that homosexuality was not illegal in the country, legal measures related to public space and decency seem to have been used against *travesti*s and homosexuals. In 1991, the police raided an HIV fundraiser meeting, and in 1993, President Fujimori fired 117 civil servants because of presumed homosexuality (Hendriks et al. 1993).

This occurrence resembles several elements found in descriptions of events of anti-homosexual violence committed by Colombian *paramilitares*, such as the public exposure of suffering, the use of shame and the recourse to moral issues to justify violence. The *Grupo de Memoria*

Histórica (GMH 2013) found the following testimony during their reconstruction of violence in the Colombian Caribbean region:

> It was a gruesome spectacle. It started early. Beer was sold, there was food, everything. They [*paramilitares*] forced people to start a boxing match. You know that making gays box is like a parody for them; everybody was laughing, it was like a roman circus. They boxed, everyone laughed. They were forced to use those women's gowns and boxing gloves and looked like women slapping their faces. Men hit each other when boxing but they [gays] were just slapping. That was fun, people laughed.

After this event, one of the participants was killed, others were displaced and some stayed in the area. For the authors of the report, this public spectacle was intended to denigrate the victims' dignity and subject their sexual orientation and lives to public shame and mockery (GMH 2013, p. 322).

In the Colombian case, human rights organisations have extensively documented the police's perpetration of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender women and men, mainly in urban contexts (Caribe-Afirmativo 2015; Colombia-Diversa 2013). These reports, information collected for this research and other sources (Nancy Prada et al. 2015) do not suggest a state-sponsored strategy to use anti-homosexual violence as part of warfare in Colombia. Nevertheless, alliances between *paramilitares*, armies and vigilantism have created an area in which state responsibility can be suspected. State responsibility because of omission is evident.

The analysis suggested by the GMH, echoing activist organisations, locates the roots of such violence in broad features of culture and society. Albarracín and Rincón (2013) argue that the invisibility and silence surrounding the violence against LGBT people in the Colombian armed conflict is the continuation of a totalitarian social order, lack of acceptance and homophobia in communities. They imply that such violence is not an isolated event but part of a social context. The problem with their argument is that, by making this the consequence of generalised features of culture or society, the uses of anti-homosexual violence by armed actors in specific circumstances are blurred, and, thus, making them accountable for their actions becomes difficult. Additionally, it impedes understanding of the interests behind violence and, by looking at an event like the one described above only in its homophobic dimension, it also overlooks how those uses of shame and ridicule may be connected to aspects of race.

The fact that political homophobia is used by groups contending political power should not lead to the conclusion that all of them are homophobic. Attitudes in guerrillas and liberation movements seemed to fluctuate between rejection and partial tolerance. Some groups can even present themselves as "pro-gay." In Nicaragua, where *Sandinismo* wanted to be perceived as a progressive movement, it presented itself in international arenas as being inclusive of homosexuality (Lancaster 1992). The attitude changed, however, depending on whether the topic under discussion was male or female homosexuality (Babb 2003). This apparently progressive approach did not continue in post-conflict Nicaragua.

Several South African participants who were active in anti-apartheid struggles challenged descriptions of liberation movements as homophobic. Sheila's reference to her comrade who had a same-sex partner and the fact that it was known by others but kept "on hold" needs to be understood in relation to the importance of the "underground" and secrecy as part of the political strategies of liberation movements. Some individual gay men and lesbian women like Sheila could be open about their homosexuality as a result of factors such as their position in the liberation movements, alliances with other political groups or the role given to sexuality in their personal identities. However, keeping sexual identity unmentioned could be strategic in a particular political debate.

The previous descriptions would suggest that some of the uses of political homophobia vary when applied externally, for example in communities where liberation movements act, than internally, in their members. Therefore, to affirm that liberation movements may suffer from internalised homophobia would be reductive. The "underground" was mentioned by several South African participants to describe political resistance strategies. It permitted undercover actions in favour of anti-apartheid struggles, avoiding state surveillance. "Going underground" implied having a safe place to hide, to keep identities secret and to live parallel lives. It also implied codes of secrecy, silence and unspoken rules, as described by Paddy Nhlapo and Neil Miller (Miller 1995; Nhlapo 2005). Nhlapo describes that during his life as an underground activist, he also had his "underground gay relationships," while simultaneously maintaining relationships with women. The idea of the "underground" describes a situation different from "being in the closet," as in identity politics. The underground results from the codes of secrecy required by political resistance in liberation movements. "Coming out" results from making sexual identity the core of political agency. There we have two different political strategies to promote change.

The Uses of Political Homophobia

The previous section shares with the current literature on political homophobia the idea that anti-homosexual violence serves the interests of political sectors struggling for state power. In order to understand how those interests are served, we need to look at local contexts and the specific dynamics of conflicts. If we accept that homophobia is not a homogenised issue, then the same assumption needs to be applied to political homophobia.

The case study on South Africa, described in detail in Chap. 4, showed how anti-homosexual violence and homophobia were deployed to diminish the power of anti-apartheid struggles, producing results in support of the militaristic control of the state. The stigma on homosexuality was used to weaken support for anti-conscription campaigns, as in the case of Ivan Toms. It was also used to divide anti-apartheid mobilisations and to fracture their sense of collectivity, as in the trial against Simon Nkoli, an anti-apartheid and gay activist and his comrades in the United Democratic Front. These results are similar to those found by Currier (2010) in the case of South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia. Political homophobia was instrumental to suffocate political opposition and reinforce the masculinistic positions of those in power.

Beyond this, the present research found that the political use of homophobia as a counter-attack strategy is selective. That use may be not based on an intentionally calculated result. Accusations of homosexuality and the outing of gay leaders were productive in the case of anti-apartheid struggles against militarism, but did not have much value in stigmatising student mobilisations. In the latter case, it seems to have added little as a counter-attack strategy. Negative attitudes towards homosexuality were used by South African paralegal and criminal groups for their own interests, as can be deduced from information about mugging, extortion and the actions of fake police in cruising areas during the 1980s and 1990s. Lack of action by state institutions, and the contradictions faced by victims when denouncing their attackers, facilitated those actions. The blurred areas created by "dirty trick" strategies contributed to the use of homophobia for both criminal and political purposes. The result was a kind of state homophobia exercised by non-state actors.

In Colombia, *paramilitares* have controlled local state institutions and political structures, and their use of anti-homosexual violence can be seen

as a kind of parastate homophobia. Death squads have been using anti-homosexual violence as part of economic strategies such as the gentrification of impoverished areas and disputes over control of areas of criminal influence. *Paramilitares* have used anti-homosexual violence in their territorial expansion strategies. Those strategies required a despotic local control of gender and sexuality, as has been found in previous research done in Colombia (CNRR 2011). Both patterns of anti-homosexual violence found in Colombia confirm the idea that political homophobia serves political purposes, though the configuration of practices differs from that in South Africa.

A common element in both cases is the use of direct violence under situations of conflict escalation and when warfare strategies would cause a high impact on civilians. The Total Strategy policies supported by the South African government in the late 1970s and early 1980s included more repression of civilians and legitimised the use of "dirty tricks" to diminish the power of anti-apartheid struggles. *Paramilitares* in Colombia used multiple strategies to create terror before, during and after action on the areas in dispute (Granada, Restrepo, and Tobón 2009; López 2010). In both cases, diverse forms of anti-homosexual violence were deployed.

Beyond the findings of previous research on political homophobia in Colombia (CNRR 2011; Prada et al. 2012, 2015), focused on the effects of heterosexual norms and moral orders, this research emphasises the importance of the economic gains of such violence for those in political struggles. Early research on extrajudicial killings of *travestis* and homeless homosexuals (Ordoñez 1996; Rojas 1994) suggested the connection between the action of social cleansing squads and gentrification processes in capital cities.

The present research suggests that with anti-homosexual violence, armed gangs reinforce the perceptions of insecurity, abnormality and collective fear required to justify private security. This security may be offered by the same criminals that produce those fears. That can be the result of alliances between demobilised *paramilitares* and criminal gangs selling protection in marginalised urban sectors (Bedoya 2013). That idea connects with Currier's analysis of how political homophobia benefits some (masculine) groups while excluding others. Those benefits are not only related to favouritism, legitimacy or acceptance of their actions, but also in terms of economic gains through provision of services, extortion, control of spaces of production and the exploitation of *travestis*, impoverished

homosexuals and other marginalised groups. Extrajudicial killings can be seen as the murderous exploitation of those individuals.

This research also confirms the importance of locating political homophobia in the interactions between colonial legacies, post-colonial interactions and nation building. Political homophobia has a place in tensions between national and international orders and in the debates around social change framed within the tensions of modernity, tradition and culture.

In South Africa, the uses of anti-homosexual violence are connected to the colonial legacies that sexualised racial discrimination and constructed the hegemonic masculinity required by apartheid (Morrell 2001; Shefer and Ratele 2011). At the same time, ideas about the gay community or gay rights were developed in constant interaction and debate between local and transnational tendencies (Fine and Nicol 1995; Gevisser 1995). Anti-apartheid activists in exile in European capitals interacted with social movements in the host countries and learned from them (Kraak 2005). International gay organisations influenced local debates (Rydstrom 2005).

Transnational relations act as markers of distance, when used to represent homosexuality as a "Western" invention. Following the previous example, such representation was not just found in black communities but also in anti-apartheid organisations. As some interviewees remembered, sexuality was a forbidden topic in student organisations, where gay identity was seen as a "Western" issue.

The situation in Colombia is different in terms of colonial legacies and the tension between tradition and modernity. The regulation of sexualities and gender relations was not only part of the colonial process but was also part of the creation of independent nations (Balderston and Guy 1997). Ideas about honour, respectability and decency can be traced to Latin American colonial social orders, and were reshaped in the nineteenth-century nation-building processes (Johnson and Lipsett-Rivera 1998; Uribe Uran 2001).

Research results suggest the importance of sexuality and purity in social orders imposed by armed groups (see Chap. 3). Ideas such as social cleansing and the targeting of social subjects seen as deviant can be understood as the continuation of this history. Armed groups recycle and renew such ideas to justify their actions. The linking of homosexuality, prostitution and deviant behaviour, such as alcohol or drug use, was historically validated by mechanisms such as threats and the imposition of codes of conduct.

Instead of considering anti-homosexual violence in armed conflict as a result of heteronormativity, this research advocates for the importance of examining long-term racial and class patterns associated with racial purity, respectability, honour and colonialism. The story shared by Lena in Chap. 3 exemplifies this issue well in the case of Colombia. Concerns and moral panics about white male youth mentioned in Chap. 4 illustrate the same issue in the case of South Africa.

Colonialism is not just a legacy in Colombia; it is also a constantly renovated strategy of political and economic control. The expansion of paramilitarism and the imposition of neoliberal economic policies that require redistribution of land use in the Caribbean can be understood as a strategy of "internal colonialism" (González Casanova 2006). The second pattern of anti-homosexual violence in Colombia, as it increased with the expansion of *paramilitares* in the Caribbean region and as discussed in Chap. 3, illustrates this point.

In Colombia, in spite of the importance of traditional institutions such as the church in politics, culture and sexuality, no direct connection was found between them and the politicisation of homophobia in the context of socio-political conflict. Similarly, in the case of Poland, Graff (2010) found no univocal association between Catholicism and the politicisation of homophobia. On the contrary, the documentation of anti-homosexual violence since the early 1980s has been done by human rights organisations associated with progressive sectors of the Catholic Church.

Tradition, as explanatory argument, creates the perception that political homophobia is the consequence of historical heritages. Instead, it results from particular political arrangements.

"Tradition" does appear in leaflets and in the strategies used by *paramilitares* as a claim to justify violence. As in South Africa, political actors struggling for state power use homophobia to redefine tradition and obtain the support of communities. Tradition and the claim to protect national values have been used by conservative sectors in Colombia in debates about marriage equality (Serrano-Amaya 2012). In those debates, churches from different Christian denominations have used homophobia to define their politics in debates surrounding sexual and reproductive rights and women's rights.

Political homophobia is not only an instrument of power. It is also a way in which power is produced and exercised.

A Conglomerate of Violences

The literature review offered at the beginning of this chapter, as well as the two in-depth case studies presented in Chaps. 3 and 4, offer enough evidence to prove that homophobia cannot be ignored when explaining the functioning of socio-political conflicts and political transitions. At the same time, the discussion introduced in the last two sections of this chapter argued that anti-homosexual violence in contexts of socio-political conflict is not a unified phenomenon but a conglomerate of different forms of violence, subordination and injustice, with different causes, uses and results. This is the thread used for the in-depth case studies of Colombia and South Africa. It is also the result of juxtaposing disparate cases. Those practices of violence change with time and do not act uniformly. They also change according to the type of conflict, serve different functions and create different effects. As discussed in the two cases, assuming that all of these practices can be explained by the functioning of socio-political violence would be reductive.

What is more, making a direct association between the uses of anti-homosexual violence and the decisions of armed actors to use them for their benefit would also be problematic. Other structural conditions increase the effect of those uses of violence or facilitate their emergence. In the case of Colombia, high levels of impunity from prosecution can be seen as facilitators of such actions. It is generally believed that fewer than 10 per cent of cases result in conviction when the efficacy of the Colombian legal system is considered, although this figure is still disputed. Some studies suggest that only one in three homicides is investigated; in 80 per cent of violent deaths, there is no information about the circumstances of the event; and only 4 per cent of cases result in a sentence (Rubio 1996). According to the methodology used, statistics on impunity can fluctuate between 32 per cent and 99 per cent (Restrepo and Martínez 2004). The fact that violence against *travestis* and impoverished homosexuals happens also in association with violence against marginalised youth, drug users and sex workers, and is justified by moral violence, is a productive occurrence facilitated by impunity and the disregard for the role of the law associated with vigilantism.

Towards the end of apartheid in South Africa, the "Third Force" and "dirty tricks" became more common and contributed to create an atmosphere of fear, everyday violence and multiplication of those involved in the struggle and of the victims. In both cases, it is not possible to establish

a direct relationship between impunity (Colombia) or "dirty tricks" (South Africa) and more cases of anti-homosexual violence, though in both countries, the "Third Force" (South Africa) and *paramilitares* (Colombia) acted as paralegal forces that committed acts of violence.

This situation creates a challenge for the analysis. Separations between violence associated with the political intentions of armed conflict and other types of violence are required in transitional justice. Groups in dispute for power can use criminal activities for political purposes. Criminal groups can claim political reasons for their activities. The use of "surrogate violence" (Webster and Friedman 1989) in South Africa for state repressive purposes, is similar to the use of *paramilitares* and criminal groups in Colombia to commit extrajudicial killings.

Results of this research showed that in Colombia those paralegal groups committed acts of anti-homosexual violence. Further research should explore the possibility of a similar occurrence in South Africa. What was found there, instead, was that "dirty tricks," such as the stigmatisation of opposition leaders through accusations of homosexuality, were committed by organised pro-apartheid groups. In both cases, such actions were more intense when the conflict expanded to multiple aspects of everyday life, using terror strategies to contribute to its escalation. They also acted in an area where neat separations between actors, strategies and political purposes are not possible to establish.

This is the politicisation of homophobia by contentious groups in struggles for power. This is quite a different issue from the existence of prejudice or discrimination for sexual orientation.

On a theoretical level, the different uses of homophobia problematise the distinction between "persecution" and "discrimination" that is currently applied in refugee laws related to sexual orientation and asylum seeking (UNHCR 2008). That distinction emphasises the type of action to which a victim is subjected. Applied to the apartheid regime, the conclusion would be that there was discrimination but no persecution, even if the legal prosecution of homosexuality was possible. However, the case of South Africa shows that even without persecution on the part of the regime, there were negative effects for some subjects because of their sexual orientation. Those negative effects were productive for the regime and were implemented as part of its deployment of violence. The case also shows that those effects were not produced by sexual orientation per se, but were produced by their interconnections with other conditions of vulnerability.

When thinking about how violence is used for political reasons, intent is assumed. The two case studies gave information to show how anti-homosexual violence is used as part of political struggles, for example, to diminish the political power of enemies or to eliminate some populations and obtain more territorial control. Nevertheless, the case studies showed that sometimes those uses are ambivalent or pursue other purposes. This topic will be further discussed in Chap. 7, when considering the scientific implications of this research.

The findings of this research show that anti-homosexual violence in political transition works in two ways. Firstly, through the selective and local use of pain and suffering, it eliminates targeted individuals and their collective possibilities for action. It destroys networks of relationships and community organisations.

Secondly, anti-homosexual violence is politically, economically and socially productive for those involved in the struggle. Such productive power is expressed in multiple ways:

- It maintains and reproduces a gender and sexual order based on the domination of women and subordinated gendered and sexualised subjects. In order to do that, power produces a parasexual politics that keeps or adjusts a gender and sexual order useful for warfare. In South Africa, the idea of homosexuality as an illness that could be treated was part of a war economy that required young white male bodies to be organised into the military force. This idea of sexuality as illness was used there to diminish or suffocate political enemies. Still, that use was selective and associated with other structures of oppression and privilege, notably race and class.
- Anti-homosexual violence produces gains for the patriarchal system that supports militarism and authoritarian regimes through the normalisation of violence. As presented in the case of South Africa, anti-homosexual violence was part of warfare technologies. Anti-homosexual violence exercised in extrajudicial killings and threats against homosexuals, lesbian and transgender women strengthened masculine militarisation. In Colombia, *paramilitares* used anti-homosexual violence as part of their despotic control of gender and sexuality in the areas under their control. A gender and sexual order that subordinates women and femininity has been used to justify the violence exercised against *travestis* and marginalised homosexuals.

- Administered selectively, anti-homosexual violence reproduces class and race privileges and reinforces racist and class orderings. In South Africa, homophobia was built into the hegemonic masculinity required by warfare and militarism. In doing so, such gendering of political homophobia was also racialised. In its racialisation, anti-homosexual violence was gendered using protective measures to keep white males "pure" and using legal measures to erase possible mixing with non-white males. Homosexuality was used as a stigma to diminish the power of anti-conscription initiatives intended to keep a sense of belonging and unity in white communities by signalling an "inside other" in need of re-education and call for order. A similar use can be seen with one of the effects of threatening leaflets in Colombia, used to warn communities of the need to observe hegemonic social, gender and sexual orders.
- Since it produces the idea of order, cleanliness and productivity, anti-homosexual violence also produces economic gain for local elites, keeping some populations accessible for exploitation. In Colombia, a pattern of anti-homosexual violence has served the interests of economic sectors concerned with reshaping urban areas. Another pattern has served the economic and political interest of *paramilitares* and the elites that support them in their territorial expansion.
- Redefining victims of anti-homosexual violence as offenders (within the legal system) blurs the difference in legality/illegality, providing an opportunity for criminals to execute the duties of the state. In this way, a political regime obtains coherence and cohesion through anti-homosexual violence. In South Africa, there was also a kind of "outsourcing" of violence using third forces that could connect isolated cases of gay bashing actions with the violence facilitated by the apartheid regime.

Contestations on Political Homophobia

Political homophobia has been a useful concept to show that homophobia and anti-homosexual violence are key elements in political transitions. It shows homophobia and anti-homosexual violence as integral to the gender and sexual politics that frame conflicts and the gender and sexual orders that are produced in political transitions. Research based on such conceptualisation provides evidence to show that the violence experienced by gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender subjects in political transitions

is not accessory or subsidiary to other forms of violence but creates a discrete issue with its own characteristics and purposes. Thus, political homophobia represents a development in conceptualisations based on the idea of prejudice and fear and on approaches oriented towards abstract normative orders.

Previous sections of this chapter showed variations on who uses political homophobia, for what reasons or towards which results, in order to problematise the concept. Connecting such a disparate set of countries, events and time frames under the same concept risks blurring differences and confusing specific trends in conflict and in gender and sexual politics. Packing sexual violence against men in Bosnia or Abu Ghraib, the trial of men attracted to the same sex in Egypt, or the passing of anti-gay laws in Uganda into the concept of political homophobia, risks merging disparate forms of violence under one concept. More so, classifying a discrete set of events as political homophobia, and assuming that others are not is, in itself, a political judgement.

This research argued that from the perspective of individuals and groups acting in contexts of conflict and political transition, violence does not separate into distinct components, but occurs in complex interactions. Archival material showed how several forms of anti-homosexual violence can co-exist and intermingle in political transitions, with or without a direct connection to the political struggles for state power. Violence due to heterosexism or to racism, as interviewees in South Africa explained in Chap. 4, is mutually constitutive. In this way, classifying some of those experiences of violence as political homophobia and excluding others is problematic and shows the limits of the concept.

From the present research, three main problems can be identified in the concept of political homophobia. These are, first, the assumption of purpose, second, the focus on struggles over state power and, third, the understanding of political usage.

The idea of political homophobia as a purposive strategy is useful to show the decisions made by political groups in contention. It allows us to explore how homophobia is deployed in war strategies and in post-conflict contexts. The emphasis on purpose and choice in political homophobia challenges the idea of homophobia as a kind of irrational fear. It centres attention, however, on the intention of the political groups involved and not on the process of deployment, or the results of homophobia. In such processes, constraints, renegotiations and changes occur. Moreover, the

choice to commit an action of political homophobia, as it is defined (Bosia 2013), may end up having different effects from those intended.

The present research shows that anti-homosexual violence is used and deployed in conflicts across a variety of situations, obtaining results that are differentiated, ambivalent and sometimes unexpected. These findings call into question the notions of intention, decision and strategy and are at the base of the concept of political homophobia.

The case of South Africa challenges the idea of political homophobia as a purposive strategy. It seems there was no rational or strategic decision to use homophobia as part of warfare strategies. Nevertheless, the apartheid regime let anti-homosexual violence happen, as in the case of aversion therapy in the army. Legal orders that could be considered homophobic were used for purposes that were not strictly related to sexual deviance. In their analysis of convictions for sodomy and "unnatural sexual offences," Botha and Cameron (1993) show that those laws were used mainly against "non-white" males. More than a choice to persecute homosexuals, what was at stake there was the creation of a space that allowed the permanence and transformation of systems of oppression with multiple faces.

The case of Colombia can be more adequately explained with the concept of political homophobia. Thus, *paramilitares* used anti-homosexual violence in their struggles for territorial control and in their contention with other political groups, such as state institutions and guerrillas. Homophobia has helped their purpose of obtaining detailed control over the lives and bodies of the inhabitants of the communities under their rule and, likewise, it has provided them with economic benefits. *Paramilitares* construct certain subjects as a danger and a menace to revenue and concurrently offer security from this threat. Rather than a result of intolerance, prejudice or *machismo*, this use of homophobia and anti-homosexual violence operates as a strategy to produce fear in order to peddle security and normalcy. This implies the appropriation of the bodies of others as part of the warfare industry.

In Colombia, anti-homosexual violence did not act as a separate event. It occurred in close relationship with other forms of violence. In association with marginality and domination, those forms of violence are more than political homophobia. They are based on the struggles for state control and in redefinitions of the nation. They act not only in broad gender and sexual politics, but also in the politics of social ordering and the creation of hierarchies. They are part of the creation of the "others" required to define the "self" in the new project of

nationhood. The previous reference to the selective use of sodomy laws against non-whites in South Africa can be seen as part of that intrinsic relationship between gender and sexual discrimination and other forms of domination.

The focus on purpose and strategy in the concept of political homophobia is useful when exploring how gender and sexual politics operate, but this focus risks reducing gender and sexual violence to nothing more than an instrument of armed conflicts blurring the production of new gender and sexual orders through violence. As this research shows, anti-homosexual violence is not only productive for the purposes of political groups in conflict, but it is also part of the gendering and sexualisation of conflicts and of the making of the gender and sexual orders that they create.

In relation to the second point, the literature using the concept of political homophobia places the state as the key point of reference. Literature on "state sponsored homophobia" (Amnesty-International 1997; ILGA 2014) often focuses on state institutions such as police or legislation, particularly laws that penalise homosexual behaviour. Michael Bosia (2013, p. 31) offers an expansion of the concept of "state homophobia" as related to strategies and tools used by contenders for and holders of state authority. Liberation movements, authoritarian politicians or armed groups may be seen as users of political homophobia.

This idea, nonetheless, assumes a notion of the state that tends to be the liberal democratic state or a situation in which the state is the main holder of power. This association between political homophobia and groups in contention for state power may lead to the idea that other groups apparently not in dispute, such as economic and social elites, are not involved in political homophobia. In Colombia as well as in several African countries, non-state groups such as paramilitary, guerrillas and criminal gangs have control over the power that would be held by the state in the United States and in West European countries. It can be argued that those groups are not just in dispute for state power but act concomitantly with it.

In both Colombia and South Africa, the overlap between legal, para-legal and illegal militants makes it difficult to maintain a separation between state and non-state perpetrators of homophobia. The case study of Colombia showed that economic and social elites cannot be excluded from the analysis of anti-homosexual violence in the conflict. Classifying their use of homophobia as social prejudice, disengagement or shaming

would be far too limiting. At the same time, separating their involvement from the use of homophobia by state institutions, or other bodies competing for state authority, would erase the links between the different kinds of agents. If there is political homophobia in terms of legal persecution, then social, cultural and economic elites can contribute to its discriminatory practices, as in the case of South Africa. When there is political homophobia in terms of persecution by armed groups competing for state authority, social, cultural and economic elites are also part of the production of discriminatory practices, as in the case of Colombia.

Because of its focus on contention for state power, the concept of political homophobia does not allow understanding of the political strategies of social sectors that do not have the state as a main point of reference in their struggles for dignity. In some ways, the concept of political homophobia is still within the frame of the "political process" approach to social movements and social change (Tarrow 1994). In that frame of analysis, as suggested by Armstrong and Bernstein (2008, p. 77), collective action is considered political only when it targets the state, and social movements are understood through their struggles against one principal source of domination. Gay and lesbian movements are an example of struggles that target not only the state but also society and intend to produce changes in several sources of domination with symbolic and material effects.

In this way, political homophobia would be an insufficient concept to explain some of the struggles that gay and lesbian movements implement in situations of political conflict. That would be true in the cases of the struggles for dignity that several participants in this research expressed and that ignore the state as a point of reference. These are the struggles that politicise homophobia as an issue in order to demand attention from the state.

Even if the argument does focus on the state as a point of reference, this research shows that the state is not a monolithic institution when dealing with homophobia. A state can implement, at the same time, strategies for regulated inclusion of sexual diversity and strategies for "not knowing" (Nordstrom 1999) about certain forms of violence. Information collected from local bureaucracies in Colombia illustrates the tensions created when anti-homosexual violence became a matter of public policy as shown in Chap. 3. When the point of analysis is the state in practice, conflict must be recognised not only between groups vying for state power, but also

within state institutions for the meanings and implications of the changes they have to provide.

Finally, there are politics in the concept that deserve consideration. The fact that the concept of political homophobia has been developed in societies experiencing war and protracted conflict, such as Africa or Eastern Europe, can easily lead to the idea that political uses of homophobia are intrinsic to conflicts in those areas or cultures. In that respect, the concept echoes knowledge produced for the purpose of activism in international NGOs that describe political homophobia as a particular element of certain unstable, non-modern or non-Western countries. Applying the concept of political homophobia only to conflicts in the global South assumes that it results from their particular ways of interacting with colonisation and the way they construct themselves as nations. In that way, political homophobia becomes a label that some nations apply to others in order to define them in a subordinated place in the global map of LGBT rights.

Synthesis

Previous chapters have discussed both the long-term invisibility of homophobic violence in the analysis of armed conflicts and the effects of the strategies used to render visible what was not seen before. Sometimes, it works as a lack of state action to respond to long-term claims for justice. Other times, invisibility may act as reducing the issue to a secondary matter in research and specialised literature.

The reference to the *chiaroscuro* in sexual politics was used as metaphor of these tensions around visibility. Chiaroscuro is a way of representing in which high contrasts between light and shadows give shape to figures. Shadows and areas of light are required to render visible some objects. Grey areas are not just silences or empty spaces waiting to be discovered or enlightened. They are produced in order to render relevant other areas. Sometimes we pay too much or too little attention to some aspects of sexual politics. That is the case of the waves of interests in international media on political homophobia in some countries, but the lack of action in the structural causes for the permanence and reshaping of the gender and sexual orders that politicise homophobia in the same countries.

Such a way of giving existence to some aspects of sexual politics deserves close attention. The next chapters will focus more on the effects of visibility. What can we see when we intend to render violence visible?

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Telling Truths About Violence

INTRODUCTION

Previous chapters showed the way homophobia and anti-homosexual violence affected individual lives, as experiences of suffering and pain. This chapter explores how such hatreds, bundled in the confusing concept of homophobia, are incorporated into mechanisms of truth telling and memory that is common in political transitions. State-sponsored mechanisms for truth telling and activist memory work have been pivotal for documenting, denouncing and claiming justice for victims. They use narratives that frame what can and cannot be told. Other archives, other forms of truth telling and, most importantly, other forms of understanding justice and social transformation are ignored or rendered invisible with such mechanisms.

The chapter is organised in four sections. The first section shifts the discussion on homophobia to debates on the need for truth that characterise transitional justice. It argues that there is still much work needed for the documentation of anti-homosexual violence during protracted conflicts, but that such work needs to be explicit on the politics of knowledge that makes some issues a matter of documentation and production of evidence.

The second section expands upon such a discussion showing how organised activism has been pivotal in the search for truth about anti-homosexual violence. Using data from South Africa and the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission, that section illustrates some ways in which truth making from an activist perspective works.

Truth making and memorialisation are interconnected processes. Truth making on anti-homosexual violence associated with conflicts is also associated with the importance of memorialisation for those who decide to remember. That is the topic of the third section, connected with the notion of "activist memories."

In spite of the important role of organised activism in documenting and remembering, there are other ways of telling the truth and other memories that are ignored in mainstream narratives. Section four explores those small truths and how they are expressed.

The chapter ends with the argument that the discussion regarding social change and justice in political transitions needs to go beyond legal changes and the granting of rights to individuals and groups defined by "sexual orientation" or "gender identity." This chapter offers relevant ideas for policy work and activism, particularly with issues of social transformation in the context of protracted conflicts.

Anti-homosexual Violence and Truth Telling

With the transition to democracy, extensive human and economic resources are deployed in countries recovering from protracted violence and several technologies for conflict resolution are implemented. Compensation measures, methodologies for reconciliation and for the development of civil society are applied. Post-conflict societies are not only driven by the need for social, political or economic reconstruction, they also face intensive disputes around memory, forgiveness, remembrance and truth. The issues of gender and sexuality are a part of such disputes.

Strategies for conflict resolution, such as truth-telling instruments, have to face the challenges of remembering traumatic events. As part of these methodologies, victims recount their stories in order to obtain compensation for the atrocities they suffered; perpetrators have to tell the truth about the crimes they committed in order to obtain reductions of their sentences; events are documented and analysed in order to identify causes, effects and patterns of victimisation; and, lastly, bodies have to be found, counted and identified. Documentation of events in particular and historical truth in general is a highly political issue in the search for justice.

There is extensive literature on the production of historical truth and judicial truth as part of transitional justice. Memory has become a field

of studies with its own paradigms, methods and conflicts. The connection between memory, truth and compensation for war atrocities is not questioned. However, what kinds of connections we are talking about, how they are connected and the missing links are all matters of extensive debate. There is no doubt as to the victims' rights to know the truth. Yet there is much academic debate, as well as tension and division between state and social movements (and within each of these), regarding the kind of truth that is told, who is in charge of constructing and telling the truth and for what purposes it is told.

Colombian lawyers Rodrigo Uprimmy and María Paula Saffon (2007) argue that there are several ways to satisfy victims' rights to the truth. They include the truth produced by judicial processes against crime perpetrators, or the truth produced by institutionalised extrajudicial apparatuses, such as truth commissions. Academia, victims' organisations or human rights organisations also produce truth. Based on the comparison of international experiences and current debates with regard to transitional justice, those authors argue for a complementarity between judicial truth, institutionalised truth and social truth. Yet that complementarity, they also warn, does not mean all types of truth have the same function or can be applied in any context.

This research suggests that such complementarity may not be possible since those types of truth are in themselves unstable and conflictive, yet, at the same time, not so different. Judicial truth and institutionalised truth exist, after all, in the same field of the judicial, the rule of law and state-centrism. The gender and sexual politics produced in conflicts and political transitions make truth a contentious field.

Contentions around truth result from the different treatment and interpretation of violent events and what is considered relevant by those in charge of reconstructed communities after conflicts. Often, the task of documenting, lobbying, telling and forgetting gender and sexual truth lies on the shoulders of organisations, activists and victims. The truth they produce is part of their political agendas.

Those agendas are also on the side of state institutions and international agencies. State-sponsored truth-telling mechanisms cause a juridical appropriation of pain and suffering. In the search for truth, post-conflict scenarios and truth-telling strategies create a spectacle of violence that uses a variety of tools. Media transmissions of confession and testimonies, collective ritual for forgiveness or the translation of historical events into

documentaries and dramatisations are just a few examples of the variety of instruments created.

This spectacle and appropriation does not operate in the same way for all the subjects victimised. In the iconic example of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), an extensive body of methodologies to deal with these challenges was developed (Hunt 2004; Imbleau 2004; Lanegran 2005; Moon 2008). There were also limitations in what was rendered visible and narrated as truth. The notion of "gross human rights violations" that oriented the actions of the TRC in its first stages did not include gender and sexual violence (Goldblatt and Meintjes 1996). The activism of women's organisations demanded particular spaces to talk about gender and sexual violence.

This differential treatment of truth regarding gender and sexuality in wars, political transitions or socio-political conflicts is evident also for the case of anti-homosexual violence. There is historical and sociological information about the targeting of individuals and collectives because of their sexual orientation and gender identity during wars and in socio-political conflicts. Persecution of homosexuals by National Socialism during the WWII, for example, is often remembered as a key moment in the history of political homophobia (Grau 1995; Hekma 2003; Plant 1988; Schoppmann 1995). After the WWII, homosexual victims were faced with the problems inherent in denouncing the violence they had suffered in concentration camps, which could expose them to prosecution under surviving laws penalising homosexuality. The risk of this double victimisation sometimes resulted in suppression of the truth and caused the memories of victims to be edited and amended. Homosexuals were not recognised in post-war instruments of compensation and memorialisation. The post-war context created hierarchies of victims, giving voice to some and rendering others invisible.

The nature of the persecution suffered by "asocial" women and homosexuals during WWII has been a constant topic of debate. Some perspectives explain the persecution of Jews and homosexuals as part of the "racial cleansing" policies imposed by National Socialism (Plant 1988). For others, homosexual men and women were persecuted in a similar way to religious and political dissenters (Jensen 2002), while still others locate the issue within the broad policies regarding sexuality, embodiment and gender relations that supported ideas of "purity," "sexual balance" and reproduction intrinsic to eugenic ideologies (Grau 1995). The recollection of those events was done in the context of political identities around

sexual orientation, making those debates on documentation and memory also a matter of dispute around different political projects.

There have been some developments regarding the need for historical truth about homophobic violence in situations of conflicts. The final report of the *Comisión de la Verdad y la Reconciliación* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) in Peru has a short chapter called *Actos de terror contra minorías sexuales* (Acts of terror against sexual minorities) (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003, pp. 287–288). This is one of the first cases in which sexual orientation and gender identity is mentioned in a truth-telling mechanism. The report documented how violence against homosexual men, lesbian women and *travesti*s was committed by all the armed forces involved in the conflict. Events were made public and, in some cases, had the support of communities to justify the actions. On 31 May 1989, six members of the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (MRTA) killed eight *travesti*s in a bar in Tarapoto, Department of San Martin. *Cambio*, the weekly journal of the MRTA, claimed the action with the headline *Hacen humo a delincuentes y soplones* (delinquents and snitchers are vaporised). The massacre was justified as a response to the permissiveness and lack of action of authorities that failed to punish the *lacras sociales* (social scourge) who were corrupting the youth. Lesbian women, homosexual men and *travesti*s were also victims of detention and extrajudicial killings committed by state agents or armed groups associated with them. Considering the long history of invisibility of homophobic violence in the context of war and protracted conflict, documenting such evidence is highly pertinent.

In the cases that will be analysed in this chapter, the efforts to document violence depend on the work of human rights organisations in Colombia and gay and lesbian organisations in South Africa. They produce information that supports their initiatives and their collective interests. That documentation uses the language and logic of the audiences that they target. In the case studied in Colombia, the language of human rights or international humanitarian law defines the logic of documentation and narration. In the case selected for South Africa, it is the language of activism, identity and of the gay community that frames descriptions.

This documentation is produced under particular politics of knowledge that also work in relation to the "memory work" (Haug 1987) generated by activists and organisations. In the case of Colombia, for example, the information that was consulted comes from a database that was created, based on violence resulting from "social intolerance" (Chap. 3). In the

case of South Africa, the information analysed comes from *Exit*, a newspaper that defined itself as the "voice of the South African gay community" (Chap. 4). In the first case, it is the politics of social justice and the denouncing of human rights violations that framed the documentation of events. In the case of South Africa, it is identity politics.

This situation produces a particular kind of truth; it is not only the truth produced by the methodologies of history as a discipline; even if it uses its methodologies and theories, it is not the truth produced by state-sponsored judicial instruments that demands that perpetrators should provide evidence in order to obtain amnesty. They are truths that constitute political actors.

Truth and Activism

One of the problems in the study of homophobic violence in an international context is the lack of documentation and the difficulty in establishing facts. Documentation of abuses against sexual minorities by international human rights organisations was still rare in the early 1990s (LaViolette 2009). Problems in documentation can increase in contexts of armed violence. Colombian lawyers Mauricio Albarracín and Juan Rincón (Albarracín and Rincón 2013) identify three obstacles in the documentation of anti-homosexual violence in the Colombian armed conflict. The first obstacle is raised by the fear, shame or invisibility of victims, which makes it difficult to identify them and may cause them to deny the real reasons of their victimisation. Secondly, homophobic violence can be culturally and socially justified, and therefore homophobic reasons for violence can be hidden or violence can be explained by accusing the victim of committing other crimes. Lastly, socio-cultural conditions can affect the forms of homophobic violence and therefore their expression and management.

In the description of such obstacles for documenting anti-homosexual violence, there is an implicit reference to the notion of visibility and recognition common to mainstream gay and lesbian activism. It is assumed that it is difficult to document violence because people are not "out of the closet." However, the previous chapters of this book have argued that the factors that create violence are not related to more or less options for the visibility of sexual identity, but to oppression, marginality and exploitation. *Travesti*s who have been victims of socio-political violence in Colombia are targets because of their visibility and not for lack of it.

In spite of the problems caused by the use of "coming out" as a reference point to documenting violence, activists and human rights organisations have created archives and documented cases using media reports, charges presented to authorities or personal communications. Examples of these documents can be found in several Latin American countries, including those experiencing political conflicts such as Colombia (Colombia-Diversa 2008) or Peru (Montalvo 2006). National and regional electronic list servers have also been used to provide information about cases of homophobic violence and are important sources of documentation. Those archives and reports offer very rich information. Organisations have direct access to the topics they are dealing with and have developed knowledge on what is relevant for their causes. At the same time, information is fragmented and focused on particular events. Cases tend to be narrated in isolation from one another and with limited details. Furthermore, information contained in primary sources, such as media, has gone through several processes of editing and selection. Those processes are repeated again when NGOs produce their human rights reports, making them assemblages of overlapping and partial data.

This accumulated knowledge shows that documenting violence is not just a technical issue. The information contained in human rights reports usually offers voices and narratives of witnesses and victims. They are testimonies produced under particular logics of voice and authorship that challenge the plain description of events. Beverly (2000) analyses testimonies of human rights violations circulated as literary and autobiographic texts and the debates surrounding the ideas of reality and authority of voice. A famous example is the book *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, containing the Peace Nobel Prize winner's experience of Guatemalan violence. The book has been contested by some researchers for lack of accuracy and for being closer to a novel than to a historical document. For Beverly, searching for reality in such testimonies is not only misleading but also hides the political agendas, both of those looking for authoritative facts and of the authors in telling their stories. Instead, Beverly suggests those documents should be interpreted as art and as strategies for emphasising memories (Beverly 2000, p. 561).

This situation was a permanent challenge in the conversations and interviews with participants in this research. Participants talked about personal experiences, about events they witnessed, and from the practical knowledge that resulted from accumulated years of struggling against violence and injustice. For example, Sheila, one of the South African participants,

framed the interview by making a distinction between being seen as a witness of events and as someone with expert knowledge based on experience. She is often asked to tell stories about what happened during the anti-apartheid struggles. She said, when people interact with her from that perspective, however, they look at her as the carrier of dates, facts and events and ignore her wisdom. She approached the interview as the chance to draw up a balance of the struggles for social justice in South Africa, its achievements and challenges. She made explicit how a feminist perspective made her approach to gender, sexuality and apartheid violence a reflection on personal experience, an analysis from deep political thinking and an attempt to make real political commitments. Reducing her narrative to a collection of events or to a kind of literary genre would erase its political potential. Therefore the following section is entitled "activist memories."

In this interplay between expertise and political commitment, activists and victims have discussed what truth is needed in political transitions and for what purposes. In South Africa, the participation of gay and lesbian organisations in the TRC and the making of anti-homosexual violence into a matter of concern in the transition period were explored in interviews and archives. As a truth-telling mechanism in which the atrocities of apartheid were made public, the TRC would seem to have been a privileged space for making visible anti-homosexual violence during apartheid. What was found instead was a distinctly limited participation of gay and lesbian activists and their organisations in the TRC. What made the difference was the context given to anti-homosexual violence in the retelling of the past and the production of post-apartheid South Africa.

Several reasons can be offered for that limited participation. One was the scepticism of women's organisations in such an instrument, since it reduced women's experiences during apartheid to their roles as mothers, wives or sisters of male victims, as mentioned by some South African women interviewed for this research and confirmed in some literature (Antjie and Nosisi 2009; Goldblatt and Meintjes 1996). For other participants, apartheid was perceived more as a matter of race than of gender and sexuality, and because of that, the TRC was not seen as a relevant instrument for gay and lesbian organisations. From a more pragmatic perspective, other interviewees remembered that in a context of limited resources, organisations had to make priorities in terms of where to intervene and in what way. At the time, the priority was to obtain legal reforms. Participating in the TRC would have demanded resources that needed to be invested in the main cause.

The priorities in resisting violence mentioned in Chap. 3 were also faced in the spaces available for victims to speak. Even if victims recognised experiences of suffering associated with sexual orientation or gender identity, there was no space in state or social organisations to be heard, as Carrie remembers:

> There were cases of gays and lesbians approaching [our organisation] because they were facing violence, but there was no political space to deal with that. There was a devaluation of individual requests for change and an emphasis on macro change. [Our organisation] was focused on legal equality. There was no real recognition of the need to consider social-economic situations; that not all gays and lesbians were in the same situation. […] There was a moment in which people became single-issue-minded and missed all the other kinds of violence and interactions.

It can be deduced from this quote that the focus on legal changes common in political transitions runs parallel with the emphasis on judicial truth and on prioritising some types of stories of violence over others. More than an issue of what is forgotten and later on recalled, this suggests a gap between what is spoken, and what is heard and recorded in political transitions. Gender and sexuality as experiences of victimisation are not usually heard, as the literature on sexual violence against men and women has argued extensively.

Only two cases identified in the archives and in the interviews of gay and lesbian topics were raised in the TRC. One was the submission presented by the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE) in the Winnie Madikizela-Mandela case. The other was the research done by the same organisation on the uses of aversion therapy by the South African Armed Forces (Chap. 4). Both cases can be framed within the politics of truth forced by transitions to democracy. The first demonstrates the decisions made by activists in dealing with violence as a framework to their recognition as political subjects. The second one demonstrates the problems faced in documenting and investigating past events of anti-homosexual violence.

On 29 December 1988, members of Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela's security personnel abducted four young men from the house of the Reverend Paul Verryn to the house of Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela. During captivity, the four men faced torture, neglect and harassment. Days later, one of the young men, James Seipei, was found dead. The actions were justified

by the abductors accusing Verryn of sexually abusing the young men. A hearing on this case was carried out in the TRC. On 3 December 1997, the NCGLE presented a submission calling attention to the vilification of "lesbian and gay people," used by Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela during the hearing. In the document, the NCGLE expressed their concerns about the homophobic and racist arguments used by Mrs. Madikizela-Mandela and her supporters to defend their actions. The submission exemplifies how an activist organisation uses a truth-telling mechanism to denounce political uses of homophobia.

Another aspect of the document is how it locates activism in relation to truth telling. The document stated the Coalition's reasons for not making a submission about the "human rights violations against lesbian and gay people under apartheid" (NCGLE 1997, pp. 8–9). The first reason was the overwhelming task of the TRC and the existence of other mechanisms that could address the situation of gay and lesbian people; second, the support and identification with the submissions made by those others who participated in the struggles; and third, support given to reconciliation with those members of gay and lesbian communities who participated in the apartheid regime. The three arguments resisted the making of anti-homosexual violence into a separate topic of the apartheid and post-apartheid periods (this issue will be further explored in Chap. 7). This also illustrates the alliance-building strategies used by activists in their work for gay and lesbian rights.

The research on the uses of aversion therapy by the South African Army Forces was based on information provided during the TRC, but the research results were produced after the TRC ended (van Zyl et al. 1999). Such research can be seen as part of the process of understanding the institutionalisation of human rights abuses against homosexual men and women during the apartheid regime. It described the abuses faced and the complicity of health professionals with the regime. The report can be seen as part of the memory work motivated by the transition to democracy. In such work, documenting and reconstructing experiences is part of the process of raising awareness of past human rights violations for current projects of social change.

As it was shown in Chap. 4, individuals and organisations working for gay and lesbian rights were active participants in the struggles and in the transition processes. During the transition to democracy, gay and lesbian activists in South Africa chose a single-issue strategy, to create a main legal change and to develop it in the post-conflict context. Transition,

as several research participants declared, was framed in the logic of rights and the possibility of transformations. It involved a positive rhetoric of change and hope. It can be suggested that in such a situation, the logic of an instrument such as the TRC acted in a different way. Making anti-homosexual violence into a specific issue in the context of the TRC would have produced a painful past, especially when the creation of that past involved reproducing gender and sexual stereotypes. The logic of rights was oriented towards claiming participation in the struggles for change, not in the recognition of victimisation. The activist strategy made anti-homosexual violence visible in the post-conflict context in reference to a past of legal persecution and penalisation and a future legal logic of protection, rather than with the logic of gendered "truth telling" of pain that characterised an instrument such as the TRC.

The case of Colombia offers a different situation in terms of what truth is being told, the context for telling it, and the results of such a system of transparency. Trends to incorporate a gender perspective in all peace-building and conflict-resolution mechanisms have led also to the "gendering of reparations" and an increasing interest in exploring the different needs of women in transitional justice (Rubio-Marín 2009). The notion of gender in reparation and reconciliation laws has been expanded to include "gender and sexual minorities" and "LGBT people" as victims of the political conflict (Law 1448 of 2011). Such legal changes are a result of the activism of organisations that have struggled against a long history of denial of the victimisation because of gender identity and sexual orientation. Still, since those measures are implemented through state institutions, they are regulated under their particular logics. That is the case with a recent report on the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender women and men in the armed conflict which is written under the framework of institutional efforts to contribute to historic memory (Prada et al. 2015).

Activist Memories

The previous section suggested that production of truth about anti-homosexual violence is not only a process of describing events but is also the result of different understandings of victimisation experiences. The narration of anti-homosexual violence or violence against transgender women and men is part of a complex assemblage of memory practices that do not follow a linear order, but are juxtaposed and parallel.

Documenting, narrating, forgetting and remembering are different and parallel processes in the construction of memories by subordinated groups and in their conformation as political subjects.

Documents such as human rights reports produced by activists and NGOs are not only important tools for lobbying but are also technologies of memory. More than a description of events by native informants, those documents are narrative constructions shaped by and for the agency of subordinated subjects. What those reports contain are testimonies produced with the political intention of supporting human rights claims and creating a sense of solidarity and collective experience. In this way, they mediate the production of collective memories. The mediation of memories produced by human rights reports results from the interaction between different factors: the languages used, the different types of authorship and voices and circulation between geographies of space and knowledge. What is more, these documents are mechanisms in which pain and suffering are exposed and made public.

In Colombia, the documentation of anti-homosexual violence associated with social and political conflict was begun by activists in the early 1990s. In one of the first documents in this area, Juan Pablo Ordoñez (1996) explained cases of violence against *travesti*s and marginalised homosexuals as part of the action of social cleansing squads. The report, with a foreword by Noam Chomsky, denounced the complicity of the US government in training militants in dirty war strategies in Latin America, and created great international concern among human rights and international gay and lesbian organisations. Ordoñez, interviewed for this research, mentioned that the document received limited attention in the Colombian embassies, who were concerned more with its impact on the international image of the country than with its contents. Similarly, there was little or no response from local Colombian institutions. Still, the document inaugurated the "boomerang" strategy often used by local human rights organisations, which is to denounce in the international arena to get the attention of local institutions.

Ten years later, references regarding *homosexuales* and *travesti*s who were victims of social cleansing squads are mentioned in reports on human rights produced by United Nations agencies working in Colombia (Serrano-Amaya 2004). In 2009, the Colombian government initiated contacts with LGBT activists, in response to recommendations in the Universal Periodic Review done by the United Nations Human Rights Council. At least 15 years had passed before a systematic denunciation of

human rights violations against gender and sexually diverse groups began and before the state acknowledged and replied to these.

The "politics of not-knowing" describes this situation well, referring to those processes that make society unaware of many issues related to violence and war.

Carolyn Nordstrom (1999) used this idea to bring attention to the situation of girls in war zones, often the most exploited, victimised and defenceless and, at the same time, the most invisible. The invisibility that affects girls is not just a matter of their situation but also pertains to the industries that exploit and profit from them. Anti-homosexual violence in contexts of conflict is also affected by the politics of not-knowing. The lack of attention given to anti-homosexual violence by state institutions or by organisations in charge of conflict-resolution policies is not caused by lack of information. As the example of Colombia shows, even when information exists, anti-homosexual violence in general, and in its associations with political conflict in particular, are invisible events. In this way, not-knowing is not just silence, but it is a silence that impedes the conformation of certain subjects as subjects of rights.

Information produced by activists can be understood as a reaction to the politics of not-knowing. Due to this, construction of knowledge about anti-homosexual violence cannot be separated from the politics of identity and memory in which it has been produced. Memorialisation of the prosecution of homosexuals during Nazism started in the early 1970s, with the emergence of contemporary gay liberation movements in Europe and the United States. Before the rainbow flag that currently identifies "LGBT" mobilisations, the pink triangle and the black triangle were the symbols that created a sense of communality, because of violence. The holocaust has remained a reference for activists in concepts such as "homocaust," created by the Italian gay activist Mario Consoli (1991), and is still in use to denounce extensive patterns of anti-homosexual violence, as in the case of Brazil (GBB 2012).

Identity politics operate as a frame for remembering. The interview with Nadia and Edward in Chap. 3 showed that, while she was struggling to create a life narrative as an agent in making a better life, he was asking her to answer to a script of identity formation based on experiencing violence and discrimination. The next section of this chapter will present a detailed description of that conversation.

Identity politics situate violence and discrimination as a kind of foundational myth for collective organisation. The iteration of homophobic

violence is necessary in situations of impunity. In this case, memorialisation is important for the retrieval of histories and experiences of victimisation. Such projects occupy a strategic place in the post-conflict moment, when reparation for victims, reconciliation and construction of collective memories can determine new social contracts. However, this strategy organises the production of collective memories with regard to discrimination or prejudice, impeding other understandings of violence as lived experience.

On Small Truths

This section suggests that regulated definitions of who LGBT people are, mostly those that result from identity politics, affect the way in which individuals position themselves in the politicisation of anti-homosexual violence. The result of this association between identity politics and violence is that other narratives of memory are not possible and that those who are not part of groups defined by gender identity or sexual orientation are rendered invisible. The next narrative is offered to start this discussion.

Nadia's Story

I met Nadia in a small municipality close to Barranquilla, a port city in the Caribbean coast of Colombia. The interview was held in the *peluquería* (beauty parlour) where Nadia lives and works. Nadia shares the household with her sister's family, which includes the husband and four children. Nadia's sister kept serving the customers during our conversation. Men arrived as clients to have their hair done. A standard haircut cost COP2500, a little more than one US dollar, at that time. One bus journey could cost half that price.

During the interview, other *travestis* present in the parlour commented on Nadia's stories. When talking about the possibility of getting some compensation for being recognised by state policies as a victim of sociopolitical conflict, one of her friends told her to use that money to get her breast implants. She answered she would do it if she were younger and that she did not need "those things" to be a woman. She stated that she wanted to be incorporated in the displacement register as a "transsexual."

Nadia was born in 1966 in Puerto Berrío, a town in the interior of Colombia. When she was a teenager, her family sent her to live in Barranquilla with her sister.

I arrived here around 1980, displaced from Puerto Berrío, Antioquía. I came here when I was fourteen years old. Now, because of the circumstances of my life, I have started the procedures to be registered as *desplazado* [displaced], because when I came here such things did not exist. I came here because my parents passed away and because of the violence I had to face. I had to face many things that I can't remember now. At that time, there was *contraguerrilla* [counter guerrilla armies]. Nothing happened to me. I was sent (to live with sister) maybe because they wanted to do something to me.

Several times during the interview, Nadia mentioned that she did not remember certain aspects of her story. Edward, my colleague who facilitated the interview, is a trained human rights activist. He often asked Nadia to provide details on who did what, when and how. She could not offer information about the armed groups that were acting in the region where she was born. She introduced herself by explaining she had arrived in the Caribbean because her parents had passed away. Later in the interview, she explained that after she was sent to live with her sister things in her former home area went back to normal.

Reducing these tensions between remembering and forgetting to a dispute between truth and fiction may be misleading. The immediate situation in which the narrative was created needs to be considered. Nadia was relating the interview as a variation of the narrative she had to offer to the bureaucracies in charge of registering her as displaced person. She may have seen the interview as an opportunity to obtain some support from one of the interviewers. During the interview Nadia was responding to different ways of and reasons for reconstructing events that occurred simultaneously.

Just after her description of the circumstances of her arrival in the Caribbean, Edward asked Nadia if she had experienced discrimination in her family because of her "identity." Nadia made it clear that she did not feel any *rechazo* (rejection) by her family. All her family knew she was gay since she was a child, she commented. She did, however describe one experience of violence in her family as being quite common:

My family has always treated me as a *varón* [male], but they have supported me lots. They never rejected me. The only rejection I felt was when my father kicked me out of the house. That was the only rejection. But no, from my family I haven't had any rejection. They said I was like a woman; I was like one of them. The only one who realised I was (a man) was a cousin.

Nadia's narrative was organised around two ways in which the Colombian state has related to its citizens. One way is the long history of denial of the conditions of citizenship to some citizens. The other way is related to a form in which, in a context of transitions between conflicts, legal changes create new forms of being recognised by the state. This point will be explained next.

Nadia belongs to a different generation from other participants in this research who have had the opportunity to acquire the training and language of activism. In spite of multiple differences, a language of rights is common among many Colombians. Nadia's narrative differs from the narratives offered by other gay or transactivists interviewed in Colombia or in South Africa, since the state does not appear in her narrative as the reference to define her claims. In her limited interactions with the state, Nadia has learned not to expect very much from it.

When asked about direct experiences of violence, Nadia emphasised that she was lucky since nothing had happened to her. Differing from other narratives of travestis or transwomen, Nadia said that the police *no se mete con nosotros* (was not concerned with us); and she laughingly added *paso como toda una dama!* (I pass for a complete lady). Her use of the collective *nosotros* (us), in masculine form, differed from other transwomen who described themselves collectively using female pronouns. Nadia's sense of collective and belonging seems not to be the same as that of other transwomen.

Last year, when she was living with other gay people something happened, however. Some men went to their house for drinks and her housemates stole money from them. When the men realised they were missing money, one of them returned to the house. Nadia opened the door and the man stabbed her. She was in the hospital for some weeks. Her brother was helping her with the legal issues, but when he left the city, Nadia decided not to pursue any other legal steps. The judge told her brother that it was a matter of *problemas de maricas* (problems between faggots). Nadia offered that reason to explain why pursuing justice would not achieve any result. In this way, Nadia shared the experience faced by other transwomen in terms of a long tradition of denial and lack of attention by the state and its protective instruments. There is also a common mistrust for the state as a trustworthy body to deal with conflicts.

The other way in which the state appeared in Nadia's narrative is through the recent policies that create an official register for internally displaced people in Colombia. According to new legal frames, people who

have experienced displacement because of the actions of armed paramilitary groups are asked to give their testimony to corresponding bureaucracies. Some administrative procedures are followed to verify the stories offered by victims. Those accepted in the register as displaced people are entitled to compensation. The town where Nadia lives has been receiving a significant number of people displaced by the conflict. Today, it is one of the first municipalities with housing projects for victims of the conflict. Asked about the reasons for going to the institution in charge of registering internally displaced people, Nadia said:

> On February 28, I was interviewed. I was incorporated in the displaced register to see if I can receive some help. Now in March I have to go again. I don't know what *ayuda* (help) I will be given, maybe money, a house. Any help I receive, I will agree with it. Nowadays I am really bored with my sister. I want to have something I can consider mine, my own space. People told me to follow that procedure. I didn't do it because my identity card is not from here but the ombudsman told me that it does not matter, a displaced person is a displaced person!

It is possible to argue that Nadia is using one of the few instruments that the state has created to give some citizens the chance to obtain a limited chance for compensation for civil injustices. She found out about the instrument through another *travesti* who knew the case of a gay man who had been displaced with all his community by *paramilitares*. He received a house in their town. That would explain why, in search for some economic independence, she used that mechanism. Her life story showed that without access to education, growing up in a peasant's family and with limited family support, her chances for social mobility were restricted.

As she also expressed, what she was expecting to receive from the state was *una ayuda* (some help). Nadia did not explain her situation as a lack of rights and compensation as reparation for the harm inflicted on her. She was responding to what the state has been teaching the citizens for a long time: the state offers "gifts" distributed according to the will of the bureaucracies that are in charge of administering them.

This extensive narrative is useful to illustrate how people in particular situations are forced to recreate their life stories to fit what they think the new legal frameworks expect of them as victims of gender identity and sexual orientation (this conjunction of two categories will be discussed in Chap. 7). They reflect on their lives to remember events and connect them

in ways required by their declarations as "victims," seeing themselves as minorities defined by an experience of violence. In the story that Nadia shared, she struggled to explain her life story as a trans woman under the narrative of discrimination required by the gay activist who participated in the conversation.

This problem has been already identified in related discussions. Stereotypes and preconceptions about same-sex sexualities also shape the way in which events of victimisation are documented and victims are compensated. Researchers have found that authorities in countries receiving asylum seekers such as Canada, the United Kingdom or Australia use their preconceptions and stereotypes about homosexuality to judge the relevance or not of their claims (Millbank 2002). Those preconceptions are not only based on ideas about gay identity in the metropolis, but also on male homosexuality. Because of that, asylum seekers are forced to provide a narrative of themselves that matches the expectations of authorities in receiving countries about what it means to be "gay," and therefore liable for prosecution in the countries of departure (Raj 2011).

The result of this situation is that those who are fluent in the language of rights and their mechanisms are able to obtain the benefits granted by the state more easily. Others may not be recognised or their experiences are rendered invisible. Their micro-truths, since they are narrated in other languages and with different connecting relationships, do not have the possibility of complementing any other kind of transitional justice or truth.

In the above, the importance of documents such as reports on human rights violations as part of activist memories was stressed. When looking at small truths it is important to consider other sources for such memories and other ways to create unconventional archives. Anne Cvetkovich argues that due to trauma, conventional ways to document and to represent memory are rendered difficult (Cvetkovich 2003, p. 7). Because of that, some memories needed to be explored in unusual and ephemeral archives. Testimonials, rituals, and audiovisuals can be some of those repositories. A narrative like that shared by Nadia can be seen as an archive of feelings. Beauty parlours can be seen not only as work places but also as the depositories of those archives of feelings.

Small truths may be ignored by the truth imposed by political activism and identity politics. As mentioned above, when introducing the role of Edward as interviewer and human rights activist, the questionnaire he uses to document experiences of violence are framed in a cause-effect narrative.

Even more, it demands a way of narrating the truth based on the description of factual evidence that enters in dispute with other ways to talk about events of violence, as Nadia was doing.

In that sense, Nadia seems to struggle with the need to be defined as a victim created by law and by activism. During the interview, she resisted the tendency to describe her life story as a script of rejection because of her identity. The administrative process she followed seems to be more a mechanism to compensate for a long history of exclusions rather than a response to a feeling of harm because of displacement. Political violence, along with other forms of violence, is part of that history. However, the way she sees herself is more than a history of violent episodes, as she stated early in the interview: "In spite of what I am, I have been very lucky in my family, with my colleagues, people in high society, the whole of humanity. I have never been rejected by anyone for anything." That claim does not deny the injustices she has faced. What it seems to do is to claim some dignity, when the state and some forms of activism just look at her as a subject in need, as a victim or as a site for violence.

Memory practices and the creation of political subjects are two interconnected processes. Nonetheless, this interconnection can have different courses. Identity politics organised around the idea of "gay pride" that characterised mainstream homosexual movements in Western societies, and used memories of shame and discrimination to claim pride and coming out as the core of subjectivities (Galloway 1983). The idea that shame needs to be overcome to affirm pride is at the core of the conceptualisation of homophobia (Weinberg 1972). Tendencies oriented by queer theories and queer politics read shame and the trauma of discrimination because of gender identity or sexual orientation in the opposite way, as a productive experience of queer subjects (Cvetkovich 2003; Halperin and Traub 2009).

Truth telling exposes individuals to a spectacle of violence that may reproduce victimisation. Such reproduction is not just limited to the retelling of the experience of violence during the conflict. Sexual orientation lived under the hegemonic model of "coming out the closet" is in itself a truth-telling experience. This saturation of demands to tell the truth about themselves does not compensate victims but may end up subjecting them to new forms of domination and discrimination. That is the case of the regulated inclusion based on the making of sexual orientation/gender identity as an issue of discrimination imposed on by neoliberal states in the transition to democracy.

SYNTHESIS

This chapter began by showing the importance of documenting anti-homosexual violence as part of the demands for justice that characterise transitional justice. It showed that the demands for truth not only involve the search for facts and evidence but disputes about the meaning of truth. From the perspective of victims, the meaning of truth and its value as justice needs to be separated from the focus on the law and the state.

It is suggested here that the discussion regarding social change and justice needs to move forward from legal changes and the granting of rights to individuals and groups defined by sexual orientation or gender identity. In Colombia, socio-political violence and extrajudicial killings (wrongly called social cleansing) target individuals and collectives in a complex interaction of marginalities and vulnerabilities caused by social structures (Chap. 3).

Social change and the transformation of injustices are experienced in specific time frames. Those frames are not aligned in sequences of progress, as transitional justice or conflict transformation assumes, for example with the idea of a post-conflict time sharply different from a time of conflict. In terms of gender and sexuality these time frames overlap. There are sometimes contradictory tendencies towards change. Moreover, the time frames of communities, activists and institutional agents differ from each other. In their process of remembering events, some South African research participants expressed a feeling of rupture with the past but disappointment with the present (Misa's story in Chap. 4). On the one hand, transition to democracy and the instruments for reconciliation have removed a past typified by injustice and denial of citizenship. On the other, the unfulfilled promise of change creates disappointment and bitterness.

When considering the struggles for dignity made by individuals and their collectives in contexts of socio-political conflict, it is important to keep in mind that we are looking at different forces in interaction. One is the constructive and deconstructive power of violence to "unmake and remake" the social, discussed earlier in this book. The other is the drive for change and the alternative projects created by those located in multiple vulnerabilities. They are not opposite or separate forces, nor are they equal forces.

To consider the struggles for dignity is not to justify violence or to fetishise the limited options individuals and groups have for survival. In the story that Zoraya shared (Chap. 3), when she decided to face the

leader of an armed group for the threats she received, she used her sense of humour and confidence to obtain permission to stay. By looking only at that fact, it could be seen as a performance of identity used as a resistance strategy. But that result was part of the power of the paramilitary to control life and death.

In conclusion, the search to document events and uses of anti-homosexual violence offers a different angle on the notion of change that is produced in conflicts and political transitions when discussing underlying assumptions of truth. The forms in which anti-homosexual violence is spoken and made visible tell a relevant story about how the existence of certain groups is made possible—or is denied—in political transitions. The re-pathologisation of sexualities may be a general tendency; it is often ignored under the urgency to end other forms of violence, mainly armed violence. The discussion of extrajudicial killings in Chaps. 3 and 4 suggested that such practices may be constitutive of certain forms of political interaction. Instead of being an exception, anti-homosexual violence in its combination with violence against other subordinated subjects may be a constant in the creation of those zones of abandonment where elimination of those in situations of extreme vulnerability is a common pattern of interaction. The political implications of studying anti-homosexual violence in contexts of protracted conflict cannot be seen only in terms of understanding, but also in terms of challenging the regimes of assigning life and death to gendered and sexualised subjects.

Anti-homosexual violence, as part of gender and sexual orders, resists linear interventions promoted by conflict-resolution mechanisms. It also challenges narratives of change based on models of progress and development. In this way, anti-homosexual violence shows the limits of the policies and politics used to transform protracted conflicts. It reveals that, with the intention of reducing some forms of harmful violence, other forms of violence are incorporated. Furthermore, as much as some of the technologies used in conflict resolution can deliver change and compensate harm, they can also reshape social relations of oppression.

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Gender and Sexual Orders Making the New Society

Introduction

In this chapter, the main arguments are brought together, highlighting the need for new conceptualisations. Critique of conventional ways of thinking about anti-homosexual violence, conflicts and political transitions is connected with the need for knowledge for political struggles. The chapter offers ideas relevant to both policy making and activism, in particular about social transformation in the context of protracted conflicts.

The chapter begins by recalling the initial concerns of the research project that gave birth to this book. The findings of this research support an understanding of political homophobia as a gendered strategy, in particular in its connection with the hegemonic masculinity that produces and reproduces wars and conflicts. Yet, upon considering a more relational approach to gender, such a focus on masculinist struggles as a core issue in political homophobia needs to be reviewed.

The second section introduces another perspective to the understanding of the topic: the struggles for dignity. From that point of view, the discussion moves away from the need to produce evidence and explanations, to the question of how violence becomes a subjective experience, as well as reasons for collective articulation. From that shift, the quest for understanding violence moves from its normalisation as an object of study to a reason for collective actions against injustice.

The third part of the chapter continues the main argument of the book that we need to locate political homophobia in the gender and sexual orders transformed and created by socio-political conflicts. That section discusses notions such as "political transition" and the polarities between war and peace, often used in conflict resolution and peace-building literature. The chapter concludes by arguing for approaches that take into account the interactions between violence, sexuality and armed conflicts in their historicity, instead of viewing them as isolated objects of study and intervention. In that way, the analytical and political value of these discussions remains relevant for social change.

POLITICAL HOMOPHOBIA IS GENDER VIOLENCE

This research follows studies that looked at how violence not only unmade but also remade social and gender orders (Das 2008). In that perspective, violence is seen not only in its dimension of destruction and suffering imposed on individual and collective bodies, but also in its constructive character. The appropriation of women's bodies through sexual violence to narrate the process of nation building in India, for example, created a sexualised social contract based on sexual violence (Das 1995).

Considering the links between gender and sexual violence against women in nation building processes (Das 1995, 2008; Yuval-Davis 1997) and between hegemonic masculinity and nationalism (Connell 2005), it is suggested that anti-homosexual violence, as another form of gender and sexual violence, is a constituent part of the dynamics of political conflicts. In protracted conflicts, anti-homosexual violence reinforces the creation of consensus around the projects of change implemented by armed groups. It also sexualised such projects. In the creation of such sexualised social contracts, groups at the margins of gender and sexual norms became targets of violence. The victimisation of such groups is not just a result of the unmaking of the social, but a requirement for its remaking.

The findings of this research support an understanding of political homophobia as a gendered strategy used by political groups to preserve and protect their masculinist control of the state (Currier 2010). Understanding the "gender regime" (Connell 1987) of an institution as its characteristic pattern of gender practices, we may say that the gender regime of armies makes them homophobic institutions since they are based on militarised masculinities. Finding homophobic attitudes in the different armed groups involved in conflicts in Colombia and South Africa

would not, therefore, be unexpected. What seemed to be different was the specific role of armies in each conflict and their place in creating and maintaining gender and sexual orders. In apartheid South Africa, political homophobia was constitutive of the white masculinities produced by the apartheid regime. In Colombia, anti-homosexual violence was part of the struggle to impose a gender and sexual order upon the communities controlled by armed groups, in particular with *paramilitares*, for their political needs.

This conclusion leads to a problem, however, when looking for a more relational approach to gender orders. The impact and possibilities of political homophobia as an explanatory concept for women's experiences requires further discussion. It also raises questions about the analytical value of political homophobia for understanding gender regimes from the point of view of women's experiences.

Feminist scholarship has argued extensively that wars and armed conflicts are masculine enterprises (Alvah 2011; Cockburn 2010; MacKinnon 2006; Pankhurst 2003, 2008a; Segal 2008; Thompson 2006). They serve men and support masculine privileges in terms of patriarchal dividends (Connell 2000, 2005). Some academics consider that conflicts increase gender differences and the use of violence by men (El-Bushra 2007; Moser and Clark 2001). Others believe that there is a continuation of male control before and after conflicts (Pankhurst 2008a). Other scholars examine not only the idea of "men" but also of "masculinities" to mention changes, continuities and contradictions in the processes of change (Connell 2000; Morrell and Stuart 2005; Waetjen 2004). What these researchers show is that gender orders change at a different rhythm from political orders. This accumulated knowledge would explain why political homophobia appears as part of the struggles to maintain and reshape hegemonic masculinity during and after protracted conflicts.

The research literature also provides evidence to show that women and men, as gendered groups, are involved differently in armed conflicts and in their transformation (Moser and Clark 2001). The active participation of women in independence or revolutionary movements, often ignored in the recounting of conflicts (Mies 1998), is also rendered invisible in the post-conflict moment, as cases from Algeria (Lazreg 1990) or Nicaragua (Cupples 2004) show. Women are often excluded from peace negotiations, and after settlements there is a tendency to cast them in traditional gender roles (Caprioli 2000; Karame and Tryggestad 2000; Moser and Clark 2001; Waylen 2003). In terms of gender violence, there seems to be

a continuum between gender-based acts of violence that occurred during armed conflicts, or political violence and those that occurred in non-war moments (Moser and McIlwaine 2001). The use of sexual violence as a war strategy has also been extensively documented. This opens an important debate: what can political homophobia say about women's experiences of war and political transitions? Is political homophobia mostly a male-oriented concept? Do we need a different conceptualisation in order to provide a more comprehensive approach?

The case of South Africa showed that lesbian women participating in anti-apartheid struggles did not make their sexual orientation a matter of activism in the same way as the men did. Their experience of violence was not limited to sexual orientation, but was part of old and new gender orders that perpetuate the subordination of their political agency. For some women participants in this research, feminism was fundamental for their politicisation of gender violence, for their understanding of apartheid and for their collective mobilisations. In this scenario, political homophobia becomes a limited concept to describe their experiences. These differences are evinced in the following story shared by Sheila.

Sheila's Story

Sheila has been a human rights, gender and social justice activist since the early 1960s. She has participated in several initiatives for the rights of lesbian and gay South Africans. The story she shared was embedded in feminism, women's experiences and political activism. Her narrative illustrates the interactions between gender and sexual politics in liberation movements from the perspective of a committed activist.

Sheila started her involvement in the anti-apartheid struggles as a university student in the Southern Cape, in the early 1960s. In the late 1970s, she was involved in a feminist consciousness-raising group and in gay and lesbian organisations. By the early 1980s, Sheila was participating in a variety of organisations and discussion groups on gender and sexual politics. In the early 1990s, Sheila became more involved in the ANC, upgrading her representation from a regional to a national level.

When evoking memories about being a lesbian woman at the time of "the struggles," Sheila explained how different the experience of lesbians participating in the mobilisations against apartheid was. First, few lesbians were out at that time—at least, not as much as gay men. Second, many

women were in jail because of their political activism, and their stories were still under-recognised. Some of these were lesbian women who were discriminated against by their female comrades.

This was confirmed by archival information. In a letter to the Cape Town organisation LAGO-OLGA, an anti-apartheid and anti-heterosexism organisation, a woman detained because of her participation in an anti-apartheid protest acknowledged the support she was receiving and expressed her preference not to reveal her sexuality during the trial. In another letter, Simon Nkoli, a gay and anti-apartheid activist, expressed his concern for the lack of support that the same woman was receiving and compared her situation with the attention that his case or the cases of other gay men in the struggles were receiving.

A third difference was the position of lesbian issues in women's organisations. Women's issues that needed to be considered were rape, oppression and partner's violence. Lesbian issues were seen as less relevant, and therefore put on the back burner. They were also seen as a group that would create divisions among women. Sheila explained that at that time the mainly white women's organisations stated that lesbian issues could impede the recruitment of black women to their causes. Sheila doubted that this was true, but the results were clear: "sometimes we have to silence ourselves."

At the same time, the fact that some women in the struggles had female partners was known by their male and female comrades, but never mentioned. Sheila recalls, "There was a woman who is now in a high position in the ANC that everyone knew had a woman partner but she did not come out, as I did. She didn't want to be seen, she was in the underground." Even in organisations with a significant participation of lesbian women, lesbianism was not a topic to be raised. In one of the women's organisations in which Sheila participated, of the 21 female members, 20 were lesbians, she said. However, she was the only one who talked about lesbianism openly, since other participants told her the organisation was only about "women's issues."

The reasons for her simultaneous involvement in such a variety of organisations and her core political position were not the same. Her participation in feminism and women's organisations was part of her long-term discussion of gender inequalities and women's subordination. Her participation in the early gay and lesbian associations in South Africa was a political mission. When remembering her presence in the United Democratic Front (UDF), she mentioned participating as a "white person," whereas

she recalled her role in other anti-apartheid organisations as creating alliances with men and other women against militarisation.

The results of those involvements were also different. She explained her role as chair of one of the organisations as a strategy of political activists in the "underground" to politicise all "constituencies." That experience was not pleasant. Gay men, she said, were sexist and resistant to change. The resistance of white gay men to consider gay activism in terms of political commitment to the anti-apartheid struggles was a characteristic of mainstream gay activism, as described by other interviewees. Additionally, some lesbians were hesitant to join gay organisations because homosexual men replicated power relations embedded in heterosexual relations, as was also mentioned by other interviewees.

For Sheila, connecting anti-apartheid struggles and the fight for gay and lesbian rights was easy since both activisms shared experiences of marginalisation. Her presence with other activists against heterosexism in anti-apartheid struggles contributed to the credibility of their initiatives. At the same time, she remembers there was homophobia in progressive organisations, such as the UDF, and sexism in gay organisations.

When remembering that period in early gay and lesbian activism, she recalled that at least until the initial discussions for the new South African Constitution in the early 1990s, gay men and lesbian women were operating separately. Women were working towards "women's issues," such as attention to the problems of women victims of gender and sexual violence, and men participated in gay-oriented activities. If there were layers upon layers in the struggles, those layers were not just accumulating but entering in alliances, tensions and conflict. As expressed by other interviewees such as Funeka, activism has many shades and sometimes evolves in contradictory ways.

Funeka shared the fact that their sexual orientation was seen as secondary, not relevant, or even as divisive with other lesbian women working in women's rights. Considering the racist violence she suffered, she mentioned her distance from other gays and lesbians who "enjoyed" apartheid. With some irony, she suggested that gay bashing was the result of the white men's privilege to make sexual orientation a matter of choice.

These multiple involvements and the attempt to understand sexual orientation violence in a broader context of gender violence has been identified in other conflicts such as in the former Yugoslavia (Sagasta 2001). Lesbian women did not have the same resources to make their sexual orientation a matter of activism as did men. For women, making their sexual

orientation explicit increased other gender vulnerabilities, such as exposure to violence and exclusion from political decision-making positions. A similar situation has been identified in the case of lesbian *guerrilleras* in Nicaragua (Babb 2003; Irving 1987).

This discussion evokes one of the core problems in conceptualisations of the connections between violence, gender, sexuality and politics: how to make differences evident without fragmenting the understanding of events and impeding collective actions for change. Stories like those shared by Sheila (this chapter), Carrie (Chap. 4), Funeka (Chap. 4), Nadia and Zoraya (Chap. 3) show the problems of normalising events of violence when isolated from other dimensions of oppression. The risk of normalising violence when making it a matter of academic discussion and policy has been raised in discussions around gender and violence, for example when dealing with violence against women (Haug 1987), or when using violence as a connection between gender and sexuality (Bennett 2010). In this project, such risks implied a permanent revision of ideas such as "violence *because* of sexual orientation or gender identity" or "sexual orientation based violence."

A use of political homophobia that does not consider the risks of making direct association or isolating forms of violence causes normalisation and impedes the political change intended by analyses of violence. The conclusion thus far is not only that political homophobia is a limited concept, as stated in Chap. 5, but that we need other conceptualisations, a discussion that will be expanded at the end of this chapter.

Struggles for Dignity

One of the main problems in our understanding of the connections between anti-homosexual violence, political transitions and socio-political violence is the typical focus on destructive violence and the typically negative approach to subjectivity. This may sound contradictory. It does not mean justifying violence or fetishising it for academic purposes. Rather, it means we must locate violence in a field of discussion in which the political implications of knowledge are explicit and under debate. Knowledge about anti-homosexual violence has supported identity politics. Looking from the point of view of struggles for dignity, that knowledge can support the politics of solidarity.

In this call to review our focus on "violence" in our understanding of anti-homosexual violence and political homophobia, I am following

the warning of feminism regarding the risk of normalising violence when making it a matter of academic discussion and policy intervention (Haug 1987). Such normalisation happens through operations such as classification, searching for cause-effect relations and fragmentation. In different sections of this book, it has been argued that other approaches to experiences of suffering, pain and denial of people's humanity appear if the preliminary question changes. Mostly because of the strong influence of a conceptual framework that emphasises discipline, punishment, normativity and ruling, in much of the discussion the agency of subjects is reduced to describing forms of resistance or rebellion. When mentioned, resistance is mostly at the end of reports about violence. Victimisation is often the trope to describe people's experiences.

A different approach to the understanding of experiences of violence becomes possible when we focus on the perspectives of subjects located in particular contexts. Again this is not to deny people's experiences of suffering or to diminish their importance. Narratives such as the one shared by Sheila (above), Zoraya (Chap. 3) or Misa (Chap. 4) make the recognition of living in unjust situations evident. Yet they reveal very much more than that. The practical knowledge they offered needs to be included in our understandings of violence—and in human rights reports or academic studies on violence.

This research started as a quest to document events and explore people's experiences of anti-homosexual violence in political transitions. The research participants transcend the focus on victimisation as a connecting point of their narratives. As a process of subjectivity, the experience of anti-homosexual violence transforms into a search for dignity. This search for dignity connected their stories from the beginning to the end, from their experience of structural violence through their involvements in initiatives for change, ending with the activities in which they are now involved. This does not operate in the same way for all subjects however, as will be explored later on in this section.

Baliswe's Story

The story Baliswe shared can be summarised in the terms she used to describe herself: "I am a survivor." Her story talks about overcoming the different kinds of violence imposed by the apartheid regime and by the existence of cultural gender orders and paying the price for trying to

transform them. It is also the story of living openly as a lesbian woman in the townships, amid precarious jobs and everyday violence.

Baliswe was born in 1973 in a township in the Gauteng area. She is part of the Ndebele people. Her father left his family in his early years to become a priest and does not accept Baliswe's sexual orientation. She considers that in her ethnic group being gay is more difficult than in other communities. They have initiation schools that change accordingly with the status in community. She remembered that she was well known as a lesbian since puberty. That fact and the status of her family in the community would have made her initiation even more difficult for her than for other women and other members of the community.

She described herself as being an activist since she was 12 years old. She has been working on topics such as homophobia and xenophobia and, since she was 20 years old, in HIV related matters. Her work life has included several informal jobs and the delivery of social services, such as community health, family counselling and HIV assistance. Currently, she works in a local health centre and her payment depends on the availability of public resources to fund educational activities. She said that, as a lesbian, it is difficult to get a job. She lives with her partner and they have four children aged fifteen, ten, seven and two years old. Two of the children are hers and the other two are her partner's.

In the narratives about violence offered in her interview, Baliswe made a distinction between the violence she suffered because of the apartheid system and the violence experienced in the lesbian community.

> In the 80s I was a teenager and lots was happening in terms of violence. Politically it was very hard, because of the government, it was oppressive, and worst for the LGBT community. It was not possible to get a job, those years were traumatic, painful, physically, and wherever you went you were attacked by Police. I remember once when I was fifteen and a policeman and his friends called me names and they threw stones at me. I used to dress like this [showing her current style of clothes]. They chased me and I went to a church. I hid under a table. Next day they recognised me. He was a black police man in uniform. I didn't go into town. I was always in trouble. I reacted.

There are two important elements in this narration. One is the everyday presence of surveillance by the apartheid regime and the individual harassment Baliswe experienced because of her racial and gender identity. The

other is the reference to her resistance. Resistance and surviving are two of the underlining texts in her narrative.

She differentiated the pain that violence inflicted for political reasons and that which was inflicted for cultural reasons. She remembered that it was common that people called her and other people *stabane*, a cultural term associated with gender and sexually diverse people. That harassment and pain was increased by the sense of not having any protection, since, as she remembers, police would not take any action in such situations.

Baliswe also made a distinction between the violence they experienced during the time of apartheid and nowadays. In her perspective, there is more violence now than before. Homophobia, corrective rape or hate crime are expressions of the emergence of new forms of violence. On the other hand, at the time of apartheid it was possible to fight back and be supported by the community. That sense of support has now disappeared. Moreover, there is the risk of being arrested for fighting back, she explained. In other words, the sense of resistance has changed or even disappeared.

Her perception of the current situation of more violence was explained in concrete cases. She was a friend of Eudy Simelane, the soccer player who was raped, beaten and stabbed to death on 28 April 2008. Her death was one of the cases that demonstrated the difficult conditions faced by lesbians in townships. It also became emblematic for the definition of corrective rape as a social issue. The description of Eudy's case took a large part of Baliswe's narrative. She used the case to emphasise the lack of attention given to the violence that lesbians face and to illustrate the social support for violence, since perpetrators are known and sometimes supported by their communities. She also offered other examples to justify her perception that there is now more violence than during the anti-apartheid struggle. She has seen violence against foreigners in her community and has also faced the homophobic attitude of churches.

Baliswe's activism has exposed her to being imprisoned. She referred to being jailed several times because of her participation in gay rights or HIV treatment access campaigns. She concluded by stressing her political commitment: "gay rights are human rights and I am fighting for that."

Like other interviewees, Baliswe recognises that there have been changes once apartheid ended. In relation to violence, for example, at least it is now possible to go to the police. Although there is now more violence, people today have to accept that gays and lesbians are human beings and part of the communities. When discussing what has changed,

nonetheless, she also confirms that the equal rights granted by the new Constitution are rights with a question mark. The lack of resources to implement what the Constitution promised is a big problem, and things are more complicated if politicians become part of the problem. "After Zuma more men became more homophobic, they became worse, after all, if the president can rape lesbians, why can't anyone?" referring to the way in which some men legitimise violence.

Finally, the way in which tradition has been used is also a problem. When recalling the idea of "tradition," Baliswe was not only referring to the cultural issues she mentioned before. She was also referring to the current uses of tradition to challenge Constitutional gains and the rights they have been fighting for, and particularly, how some groups have been using "tradition" as a backlash argument against the rights that have been obtained in the reforms.

An underlying text in Baliswe's narrative is the continuity of violence and also the changes in the ways in which it is received. With the end of apartheid, real violence has increased and the possibilities to react against that violence have been reduced. In spite of that, as Baliswe said, "As long as there is space to change, I will keep on doing my activism."

Baliswe's story is a narrative of emotions. Pain, resistance and anger are at the core of her narrative. Violence is understood as pain and as resistance. Anger due to unfulfilled promises and fighting for promised rights connect her story. It can be argued in this narrative that the presence of elements such as survival, resistance, organisation or dignity might be exaggerated by an effect of the sampling used in this research. For reasons that will be explained in detail in the appendix, this research focused on individuals committed to activism. Indeed, most of the participants have had some kind of involvement with initiatives for social justice. Their work trajectories are the result of complex relations between activism, funding and professionalisation. That is of particular importance in a context such as South Africa, where international aid has been significant in the struggles for justice and in developing a sector of professional activists and aid workers. In Colombia, there is now a new generation of professional activists who have been formed, in part, by involvement in state-sponsored activities.

Nevertheless, not all interviewees have that profile. Others combine unskilled jobs with some activism that is not oriented towards demands on the state, but functions in the everyday life of their communities. This is a kind of horizontal and ordinary activism. Notable examples are the

transgender women in Colombia who use their beauty parlours as sites of encounter, dialogue and organisation (Nadia's and Zoraya's stories in Chap. 3). That is, an activism that has been producing change even before the discourse of rights, public policies and dialogues with institutions.

This search for dignity can be seen in other examples. Historical research has found that wars have been times of bonding among same-sex individuals, creating of new identities and some space for gender and sexual freedom (Bourke 1996; Fussell 1975). Homosexual cultures in post-war America were facilitated by the mobilisation of same-sex groups required by patriarchal warfare. What happened during War World II in some cities of the United States and European capitals has been described as the great "coming out" of homosexual networks and sociabilities (Bérubé 1990). Warfare industries and armies required the mobilisation of populations towards ports and places of combat, enabling networks of socialisation for homosexuals. A discreet lesbian scene emerged in London during the Second World War as a result of the access of women to independent jobs and changes in the attitudes towards the access of women to public spaces and entertainment venues (Jennings 2006). The need to provide entertainment to soldiers offered some men a refugee space for theatricality and drag performances (Halladay 2004).

Actions to transform and resist wars have been spaces for mobilisation and organisation. Early gay and lesbian organisations in the United States participated in the mobilisations against the war in Vietnam (Adam 1987). Lesbian women have led anti-nuclear actions (Roseneil 2000), participated in liberation movements in Namibia (Currier 2010) and Nicaragua (Babb 2003; Irving 1987), and provided attention to victims of war in former Yugoslavia (Sagasta 2001).

Transitions to democracy and peace can also be opportunities for the development of gay and lesbian rights and organisations, as cases from Ireland (Lysaght and Kitchin 2004), Colombia (Serrano-Amaya 2013) and South Africa (Massoud 2003) evince. Sometimes those changes take the form of legal reforms, as in the case of South Africa with the inclusion of the Equality Clause. In the transition to democracy in South Africa, decriminalisation of homosexuality was seen as the starting point of a chain of legal and progressive changes. Sexual orientation was the test to show how far the notion of equality leading the reconstruction of the nation and its focus on human rights could go (Cameron 1993).

Organised activism was fundamental in these changes of gender and sexual orders. Political uses of anti-homosexual violence run parallel to the

politicisation of collective identities as a dynamic of change. In South Africa and Colombia, activism has been a key factor in making anti-homosexual violence an event to be documented, a reason for lobbying and a way to obtain social changes.

This making of anti-homosexual violence as a reason for collective action, and activism can be illustrated by an article published in *Exit*, the South African gay newspaper referenced in Chap. 4. "Bashed," the head-line in issue 70 (1995), starts with the reference to the increment of cases of gay bashing and the reluctance of victims to report. It also explains that despite government and legal changes and the promise of protection, homophobic violence continues in South Africa. The article mentions that activists are now training the police to deal with this kind of violence in a different way. Now alarm about this kind of violence is no longer gener-ated by the deviant behaviour of cruisers as was argued years before. It is now a matter for study by academic experts, lobbying by professional activists and policy making by state institutions.

This article is also relevant because it calls for the opinions of a new generation of gay and lesbian activists leading national organisations. As was shown earlier, that is not a new development for *Exit*. The new leaders mentioned represent the kind of activism that was developed in the transi-tion to democracy and in post-apartheid South Africa. They introduce a legal language of rights, legal protection and equality. An article signed by Zackie Achmat published in issue 84 of *Exit* (February 1997) exempli-fies this change. In the article, the attack suffered by a couple of lesbian mothers and their children by a man who promised to "wipe out lesbians" from Carletonville is now framed in terms of bigotry and unlawful actions by the police. The author, a leader of NCGLE, describes the case as pos-sibly the first to recur to the courts to "fight hate crimes against lesbians and gays." The lack of an adequate response by the police is attributed to homophobia. "Hate crime" emerged in the late 1990s as a new way to explain violent actions that were no longer to be explained by the risks taken by gay men in "camping" activities, but rather the result of bigotry, the frustrations of impoverished men and the homophobia of certain sec-tors of society.

It can be argued that the connecting thread regarding struggles for dig-nity is their potential to promote social change. The changes are reflected in the accounts of individual life stories and personal narratives, as can be seen in different sections of this book. It is, nonetheless, important to explore those changes in detail and what they produce for individuals and

collectives. Otherwise, the idea of struggles for dignity would remain a merely descriptive term of social mobilisations. Even more, the struggles for dignity needed to be differentiated from changes promoted by legal measures, or mechanisms to promote social development.

In the former Yugoslavia, the inclusion of gay rights in the political orders of new nations was mainly a result of the pressures to adapt to international standards. Countries that were part of the former Yugoslavia were reconstructed with international standards administered by NGOs and foreign agencies. For example, the Constitution of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH), created by the Dayton Agreement (1995), incorporated 16 human rights instruments into domestic law (Global-Rights, Organization-LOGOS, and Organization-Q c2006). A year later, homosexuality was decriminalised in BiH. The development of civil society was promoted as part of the conflict resolution strategies supported by international organisations and cooperation agencies (Belloni 2001).

In the case of Colombia, recent legal changes in transitional justice that incorporate gender and sexual orientation as a matter of victimisation lead to a change in demands from activism for the recognition of rights as victims of socio-political conflict. This situation has already been identified in empirical research. Michael Humpheys and Estela Valverde (2008) found that in post-conflict Argentina and South Africa, democratisation resulted from a demand for rights and was implemented under the framework of neoliberal economic policies. Because of that, measures to implement social and economic rights were framed under development policies in which the state acts as provider of services and protector of citizens.

The narrative shared by Nadia illustrates the results of such neoliberal regime that co-opts struggles for dignity. She is waiting for an *ayudita* (some help) from the state, once she is recognised as an LGBT victim of the conflict. Activism proficient in the language of rights helps her to rewrite her life story within the framework of discrimination as a starting point for her struggles with the state.

ANTI-HOMOSEXUAL VIOLENCE AND CONTRADICTORY PATHS FOR CHANGE

This research located anti-homosexual violence in the gender and sexual orders transformed and created by socio-political conflicts showing that their connection is not one of cause and effect, but one of mutual

constitution. This mutual constitution was anticipated in the background of the coining of homophobia as an analytical concept.

As noted in Chap. 5, conceptualisation of homophobia had its roots in discussions around prejudice, racial interactions and social conflict (Allport 1954). The concern with race relations arose in North America in relation to the changes in the situation of African-American communities after World War II and the impact of the Jewish Holocaust. While the first issue was an experience of change in social structures in the United States, the second was an international post-conflict interpretation of the pain, displacement and consequences of atrocities during the war.

According to Katz (1991, p. 130), the most influential discussion of race relations in the 1950s was *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), an attempt to theorise and measure the reasons for anti-Semitic and fascist ideas. This research made prejudice a matter of personality profiles nurtured by repressive families and ideologies. This definition had two implications: one, making prejudice a matter of individual personalities, it was not necessary to question social structures; second, if they were produced by punitive and repressive environments, the spread of democracy and liberal ideas would change the conditions that created such authoritarian personalities (Duckitt 2010). In this way, prejudices would change with the reconstruction of state institutions and nation building that follows a period of political crisis. But evidence shows the opposite.

The concept of homophobia was developed and popularised without making this early connection with discussions around state building, democratisation and anti-authoritarianism. It has been through feminist scholarship that a body of knowledge about the gendering of the state and of nation-building processes (Cockburn 2010; Pankhurst 2008b; Yuval-Davis 1997) has emerged, as stated in Chap. 2. The idea of unmaking and remaking of the social through gender and sexual violence, as simultaneous processes, challenges the dichotomy of war and peace. It also questions concepts such as political transition and the idea of transition that supports conventional strategies for conflict transformation. A gender and sexual politics perspective allows for an understanding of the gender dynamics that permeate social change, and the connections between the intimate and national-regional levels of social transformations (Connell 2009) in which anti-homosexual violence happens.

Political transitions are often represented as having a sequential logic. It starts with agreements between political sectors in conflict, continues with the signing of some mechanisms to avoid the return of armed violence and

ends in post-conflict reconstruction (Miall et al. 2003). Sometimes, those changes can create the idea of advancement or progress in terms of the legal frames that regulate same-sex sexualities. That is the case in South Africa with the inclusion of the Equality Clause in the post-apartheid Constitution. It is also the case in Colombia with the recent inclusion of LGBT people in transitional justice mechanisms. Several participants in this research used that idea to describe the transitions they have lived through.

The fact that there are simultaneous changes in gender and sexual orders, in the events and experiences of anti-homosexual violence and in the different dimensions of socio-political conflicts, does not mean that they have the same rhythm or mode of transformation. To illustrate this dissimilarity, feminist scholars have warned of the occurrence of post-conflict backlash against women's gains (Pankhurst 2008a). African feminists regret using the division peace/war in relation to violence against women, since lots of women live in a "permanent state of siege" that continues even after conflict settlements (Bennett 2010).

Secondary literature and information collected in this research suggest that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender men and women also experience backlash in the post-conflict context. There are examples already documented in relevant literature of increasing homophobic violence after conflict settlements. Some research participants in South Africa explained corrective rape as a male reaction to the protagonist role of women in the transition to democracy, the major visibility of LGBT black South Africans and the losses experienced by men who developed their masculinities in the context of the struggles (Funeka's and Misa's Stories in Chap. 4).

The risk of explanations based on comparing war/peace and less rights/more rights, or a distinction between war gains and post-war backlashes is that they assume a clear polarity. At one pole, there is the rule of law as order and at the other, the rule of war as chaos. Political uses of anti-homosexual violence move in layers, not easy to separate or to locate in any one single polarity. Several of the uses of anti-homosexual violence happen in the balance between the criminalisation of politics and the politicisation of criminality that occurred during conflicts (Chap. 5). Anti-homosexual violence in the form of criminality has had political purposes in the conflicts in both Colombia and South Africa. At the same time, political sectors have used criminality to obtain certain gains, such as the propagation of threats and fears, in their struggles for state power. It

has been in the space of "dirty tricks," "third forces" and *paramilitarismo* that anti-homosexual practices have most occurred.

This situation makes the neat divisions imposed by conflict resolution interventions and transitional justice instruments problematic—even more so, when this overlapping is also present within legal systems. In both countries, the transformation of conflict and the transition to democracy have created new legal regimes. Those legal regimes operate under the logics of protection of sexual orientation as an expression of equality (South Africa) or diversity (Colombia), and of the granting of rights.

Alongside such legal measures, previous forms of anti-homosexual violence remain prevalent, and new forms of anti-homosexual violence appear, sometimes sponsored by the same states that have introduced formal protection. In South Africa, representations of homosexuality as un-African (Msibi 2011), justifications of gender-based violence appealing to tradition (Di Silvio 2011) or denial of HIV-AIDS (Fassin 2008), can be seen as part of such overlapping. In Colombia, the enactment of protective ruling for LGBT communities inside the police institution runs parallel to the participation of police officers in episodes of violence against *travesti*s (Colombia-Diversa 2013). A similar situation has been found in Ecuador (Lind and Keating 2013) and in transnational discourses on LGBT rights in which "homoprotectionism" (Keating 2013) runs parallel with state homophobia.

South Africa and Colombia lived different political transitions in which sexual orientation occupied different places. In South Africa, sexual orientation became a matter of protection under the Constitution that represented the new social contract signed to end apartheid. Sexual orientation was an extension of the ideals of equality, difference and inclusion that framed the new nation, the "rainbow nation." Activists crafted a strategy that gave meaning to the ideal of equality in order to obtain legal changes in favour of gays and lesbians, and later on, in favour of transgender men and women. Transition to democracy and citizenship was also the space for a transition to sexual citizenship.

In Colombia, with a socio-political conflict still active and several political transitions acting simultaneously over the years, it is not possible to define a clear division between a moment of conflict that ended in a post-conflict due to some kind of political transition. At the legal level, the Constitution enacted in 1991 created conditions that were later used for non-discriminatory measures related to sexual orientation. This

Constitution was, however, enacted under the "heterosexual regime of the nation," as the feminist anthropologist Ochy Curiel suggests (2010).

At the same time that this regime was enacted, socio-political violence continued targeting gender and sexual groups, while illegal armed groups competing for state power increased their violent acts. The enacting of the "heterosexual regime of the nation" paralleled the increment in the use of anti-homosexual violence, as can be deduced from the information in Chap. 3. While a new social and sexual contract was gradually created under the law, another one was created in the practice of armed groups.

In the early 2000s, increasing participation of social mobilisations for peace building in Colombia also became the opportunity for the emergence of LGBT as an umbrella term for disparate political agendas (Serrano-Amaya 2004). With it, legal activism, national and international lobbying and state-centred agendas, became the tendency. The "LGBT community" or "LGBT social policies" have become descriptive terms of a political subject resulting from identity politics, demands for recognition and inclusive state policies. Even though a new social contract for the process of political transition is in its early implementation, LGBT is today an identified social actor in peace building in Colombia. A connection between anti-homosexual violence and political transitions should be examined, avoiding a linear reading of events which associates democratisation and the end of political repression with the development of activism around sexual orientation or gender identities.

Homophobic violence is strategic for the normalisation of violence that is part of the gendered and sexualised ways of belonging to the nation state. This would explain why the return to normality that constitutes the rhetoric of post-conflict reconstruction and nation building is embedded in narratives of respectability, honour, tradition, patriotism or good citizenship. This can happen even when homosexuals and transgendered people are not considered a discrete or differentiated group, but when homosexualisation or feminisation of the enemy is a way to administer shame and subordination on them (Oosterhoff et al. 2004; Sivakumaran 2010).

Normalisation could also be useful to understand related phenomena in post-conflict contexts such as the appearance of new divisions and hierarchies of masculinity after conflicts (Moser and Clark 2001); the coexistence of different types of homophobia (Stein 2005) and the incorporation of certain homosexual subjects in nation-building processes as

opposed to the exclusion of other social activists (Puar 2007). Finally, instead of disrupting the ordinary, anti-homosexual violence and violence against transgender people gets folded into it. If we think about violence as part of social structures instead of an exception or abnormality, how does this change our understanding of anti-homosexual violence and political homophobia?

Thinking About Violence and for Which Purposes

This research began as an attempt to explore one form of violence (anti-homosexual violence) in its connections with another (socio-political violence). As discussed in Chap. 2, once the research started, that idea became problematic, since it assumed the existence of those acts of violence as unified phenomena able to connect with each other in certain situations (political transitions). Chapters 3 and 4 showed that what is usually seen as anti-homosexual violence is an assemblage of several, sometimes disparate, forms of violence.

Chapters 5 and 6 discussed how those links are created and argued, and that such a critique does not deny the role of violence in the creation, maintenance and transformation of unjust gender and sexual orders. Their exploration would, in fact, contribute to understanding how violence works in more detail, who suffers and who gains from it. Documenting abuses is still a powerful tool for political struggles. Instead of general conclusions that blame culture or society for violence, as in the common explanatory associations between homophobia and tradition, or between homophobia and machismo, understanding how researchers, activists and policy makers make these connections would provide better opportunities for change.

Previous sections of this chapter located anti-homosexual violence in gender and sexual orders, rather than as a form of aggression against a particular group of people that could be explained by identity politics. In locating the analysis in relation to gender and sexual orders, there was no attempt to create a kind of oppositional thinking, such as the idea that "homosexuals can also be victims." That treatment of the topic can be seen in studies that discuss sexual violence against men in armed conflicts (Oosterhoff et al. 2004; Sivakumaran 2007, 2010). It is also common in mass media to see representations of violence against men that use statistics or examples of such violence after providing information on violence against women, as if one were equivalent to the other. Defining the forms

of violence studied as forms of gender violence was not intended to create oppositions or to blur differences in gender and sexual orders.

In interaction with ideas from feminist research on gender, social structures and violence, this last section suggests that there are three ways of thinking in the making of such assemblages of forms of violence: categorical thinking, silo-isation and making exceptions. A common thread in these ways of thinking is the search for relation of causality in which gender identity and sexual orientation are reasons for violence. The result of such a quest is the creation of ideas such as "violence because of gender and sexual orientation" or "violence related to gender and sexual orientation."

Identity politics and activism have been fundamental in making these forms of violence visible. In their attempt to call attention to violence in relation to gender identities and sexual orientation, identity politics and activism have challenged the "categorical thinking" (Connell 2012) that is common in public policies related to gender, health and violence. In such thinking, men and women are represented as fixed categories, and gender violence is treated separately. Categorical thinking is also common in the mainstreaming of a gender perspective on conflict analysis (Serrano-Amaya 2013). It not only tends to represent men simply as perpetrators and women simply as victims, but also impedes the exploration of differences and contradictions inside gender and sexual orders. Nevertheless, identity politics uses a group definition that tends to separate collectivities, and makes hierarchies in the reasons for violence.

These problems can be seen in international documents. The current movement to incorporate LGBT asylum seekers (UNHCR 2008) in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees is an important tool for the protection of gender and sexually diverse individuals at risk. It is, however, based on ideas of "minority," group identity and uniformity that do not match the diversity of gender and sexual experiences in many countries. "LGBT community" or "LGBT people" is nowadays a discrete category for public policy interventions (Mikuš 2011; Richardson and Monro 2013; Serrano-Amaya 2011). This category may be useful for connecting political agendas and promoting alliances. But it creates a sense of "we" that blurs differences. Even more, "LGBT people" suggests a universalised subject. Associated with political homophobia and global homophobia, it creates a universalised victim. In this way, violence is not only a real experience of suffering imparted on some bodies but also is the condition of possibility given to them to exist as subjects. It not only makes them visible to some form of governance, it also makes them legible

as gendered and sexualised subjects. Application of this categorical thinking silences other struggles, as examples in Chaps. 5 and 6 evinced.

In an attempt to make particular forms of discrimination visible, and in the context of identity politics, activists and some academics have developed concepts such as "lesbophobia" (Rosenbloom and IGLHRC 1996), "transphobia" (Hill and Willoughby 2005) or "biphobia" (Obradors-Campos 2011). Janet Bennett calls the operation of looking at issues of violence separately and with their own categories for explanation, "silo-isation" (2010). A way of thinking can be found in the current tendency to create separate ways of understanding violence related to sexual orientation or gender identity. This thinking not only separates these phobias but also assumes that the phobia is the reason for violence, discrimination or prejudice.

That risk of silo-isation was a concern right through this research, and demanded a constant alertness to how the topics of the research were defined and were transformed in the research process. Silo-isation also implies contrasting ways of analysis. In the case of Colombia, information about extrajudicial killings and threats against *homosexuales* and *travesti*s runs parallel with similar actions against sex workers or drug users. When denouncing those events, LGBT organisations acting in the country (Colombia-Diversa 2008) have emphasised "actions against LGBT victims" and left the connections with other marginalised subjects undiscussed.

In the case of collective threats, in a few cases, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender men and women are the only targets. In most cases, they are targeted in association with other marginalised subjects. Racism is expressed in those acts of violence under ideas of "purity" or "cleansing" from sources of "pollution." The demarcation of what is acceptable in communities, recalls colonial orders based on decency and honour. In this way, marginality, vulnerability and racism are the reasons for victimisation, rather than sexual orientation or gender identity in isolation.

Silo thinking may operate not only in terms of groups but also in terms of behaviour and identities. The separation between sexual orientation and gender identity has been useful in analytical and political terms. In activism, it has been made evident that transgender women's and men's claims and the reasons to organise cannot be explained as issues of sexual orientation. In a similar way, the separation between sexual behaviour and sexual identity has been relevant in studies on HIV, for example, to explain practices that are not associated with identities.

Such divisions are problematic, nonetheless. In the case of Colombia, the identification of victims of the socio-political conflict as *homosexuales* or *travesti*s can lead to different kinds of explanations of violence. Information collected in this research suggests that what has been discussed as homophobic violence in the context of socio-political conflict may be in fact more violence against *travesti*s and gender non-conforming individuals. In this way, such violence may be less based on prejudice or fear than on social structures of vulnerability, marginality, oppression and exploitation. Logics like "coming out of the closet" claimed as a need to make forms of anti-homosexual violence visible seems inadequate in the case of *travesti*s in Colombia, since their public presence is evident.

A similar situation is suggested by information collected in South Africa about violence against effeminate men and masculine women. In their experiences, sexual orientation and gender identity or gender expression are part of a continuum that defines their individual and collective experiences, a continuum that includes, but is not limited to, gender and sexual orders. This coincides with research on violence against lesbians and transgender men in South Africa (HRW 2011), which argues that their experiences do not fit into the linear narratives of discrimination resulting from sexual orientation or gender expression.

Thus, the need for visibility, familiar as an assumption in academic and activism-produced knowledge, is limited as a way of explaining the violence faced by transsexuals and transgender men and women in contexts of conflict. Thinking in terms of separation between discrete realms becomes even more problematic when the subjects identify both as gays, in terms of sexuality, and as *travesti*s, in terms of their social position, work environment and other conditions which may include gender identity but are not confined to it.

A correlate of silo-isation is making exceptions. Making exceptions in the understanding of violence was an idea introduced by some South African participants when questioning the idea of corrective rape as a focus for policies, activism, academia and the media. With corrective rape, rape is reduced to a matter of sexual orientation and is not connected with the participants' roles in patriarchal gender and sexual orders. At the same time, it reduces discussions on lesbianism around sexual orientation and rape, disconnecting it from issues such as masculinities, heterosexuality, religion or race that are necessary if we are to understand the situation of lesbian women in post-apartheid South Africa.

As an idea applied to post-apartheid South Africa, corrective rape marks a time period that has a past and a present. As some interviewees explained, it is a symptom of the crisis in black masculinities caused by the end of apartheid. In making it a characteristic of post-apartheid, however, it is assumed that it did not happen before as sexual violence. This operation makes some forms of violence, such as quotidian gender and sexual violence, exceptional. The same is true in cases of violence against *travesti*s that, framed under the idea of "transphobia," are reduced to the fear of some gender identity or gender expression, when, in fact, they are the result of several forms of oppression, marginality and vulnerability.

The need to explore particular patterns of violence and victimisation is relevant to challenging homogeneous analyses that ignore diversity in social conditions. It is comprehensible that when the documentation and denunciation of specific forms of violence relies on the shoulders of activists, they decide to act on single issues. Limited resources require making priorities.

However, operating with fixed categories, exceptions or silos, impedes the observation of interactions and mutual constitutions. Nor does it allow consideration of why some acts of violence are valued and permitted while others are rendered invisible, stigmatised, policed or criminalised. That can be seen in the use of homosexuality as a stigma against political antagonists or communities under control. In those cases, it is not gender or sexual identity in itself that was used but the association of some sexualities with disorder, immaturity or impurity. This explains the overlapping between forms of violence with social classifications such as "internal enemy," social deviance, or threat to the social body. It is a use of sex that goes beyond sex.

More than social relations acting separately, case studies in this research show that violence overlaps and results in mutual transformation. Categories such as "social cleansing," "corrective rape" or "gay bashing" have been useful to transform some forms of homophobic violence into matters of public concern. As specific areas of interest, they may facilitate the consideration of the multiplicity of modes in which socio-political conflict and political transitions are sexualised. In doing that, however, they reproduce voyeuristic, masculine and hierarchical logics that dehumanise subjects. With the intention of making some issues clearer, they impede acknowledgement of the social relations of

privilege and oppression, the defence of "patriarchal dividends" (Connell 1987), that produce violence.

In conclusion, results of this research show that thinking in terms of a connection between anti-homosexual violence and political transitions as if they were clearly discrete realms, is inadequate. There is no connection simply because they are not separate.

This lack of connection was seen initially in this research as a result of "silences" or the "invisibility" of certain forms of violence: something that people knew happened, but was rarely investigated. But since violence is gendered and gender is violence in political transitions, anti-homosexual violence is part of the very same situation. Anti-homosexual violence does not only create hierarchies and exclusions of gendered subjects, it also produces gains and losses, negative results for some people and positive results for others. The connection that can be said to exist between homophobia and conflict is not usually a simple matter of persecution, but is constantly mediated through other social structures such as race and class, and social conditions such as vulnerability, marginality and continuous precariousness. It is in those relationships that some lives obtain value and others are pathologised.

The creation of bridges between fields of knowledge that are usually perceived as separate needs to go further than the adding of one topic to the other. We need to do more than add sexuality to the studies of political transitions or conflict resolution to the studies of sexuality. The development of knowledge also needs to go beyond the creation of specialised topics of expertise, as discussed above with the problem of silo-isation. Furthermore, it needs to transcend the institutionalisation of anti-violence movements. There is a risk of normalising violence when making it a matter of policy. Indirectly, silo-isation acts in favour of violent groups who want to divide communities.

To move beyond these limits, the crucial step is to look at the interactions between violence, sexuality and conflict in their historicity. This means more than departing from implicit connections, pre-existing separations or pre-established intersections. It means exploring the mutual constitution of violence, sexuality and conflict in concrete historical circumstances, examining specifics of place, time and social structure. In short, it means thinking about patterns of violence more as interacting in layers than in separate lines. The author hopes that this study, bringing out the historicity of violence towards the groups and people discussed, helps to illuminate the sexualisation of political transitions.

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Appendix: Methods and Details of the Research

Introduction

A detailed discussion of the methodology used in this research is presented in this appendix. It illustrates the techniques used for data collection and for data analysis, as well as the methodological debates faced due to the nature of the selected research topic.

The appendix is divided into three sections. The first and second sections describe data collection in archives and in interviews. The third section describes data management and data analysis. Each section discusses the challenges presented and the strategies used to deal with them.

Information for the case studies in Chaps. 3 and 4 was collected during two field trips. The first was to South Africa, from October 2012 until early January 2013. The second was to Colombia, from late January 2013 until early May 2013. In South Africa, archival information was collected in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Bloemfontein. In Colombia, archival information was collected in Bogota. Personal narratives in South Africa were collected in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town. In Colombia, narratives were collected in four cities in the Caribbean region: Cartagena, Barranquilla, Santa Marta and Montería.

In collecting information for the case studies, the leading question was the gendered and sexualised condition of armed conflicts and political transitions and their outcomes. Information was gathered to explore not

only the way in which individuals and groups experience anti-homosexual violence or gender identity violence, but also how conflicts and transitions to democracy are sexualised and gendered. The following issues were central in the search for information:

- The description of events and cases of anti-homosexual violence.
- Experiences of mobilisations and organisation.
- The reactions of national or international institutions to such violent events.
- Connections between anti-homosexual violence, the socio-political conflicts experienced in each country and the strategies implemented to transform them.

Data Collection: Archives

Materials accessed in the South African archives were diverse and voluminous. The collections consist of several boxes with up to six files per box. Each file contains a variety of documents, including letters, newspaper clippings and reports from organisations. In Colombia, the library, press archives and databases of the *Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular* (CINEP) were consulted. CINEP has been producing human rights reports since the mid-1880s using national press records, testimony from victims and reports generated by grassroots organisations. Compared to the materials consulted in South Africa, the materials consulted in Colombia were better organised and relatively condensed. Some of these are also accessible in their electronic version.

One important source of information in Colombia was *Noche y Niebla*, a bulletin that published information on victims of political violence. In South Africa, one consulted source was *Exit*, a gay newspaper, of which 153 issues were examined. Detailed information on these sources and sampling will be provided later on in this appendix. What both sources have in common is that they are periodic publications for public access. Both also covered a wide time frame, providing the chance to explore events of anti-homosexual violence before and after crucial historical moments in both countries. These two sources also differ in other ways. *Noche y Niebla* offers a day-by-day description of events of political violence in Colombia. It uses other Colombian newspapers as information sources, and it is produced by a human rights NGO. *Exit* is a newspaper that published news of gay life in South Africa and it is a privately owned publication. Both

sources were consulted from their earliest issues: July 1996 for *Noche y Niebla* and July 1985 for *Exit*. Two historic events were selected as ending points for the consultation of these publications: the launching of the new South African Constitution (1996) and the demobilisation of the last group of the AUC (2005).

In both cases, the research was extended some years before and some years after in order to identify changes and continuities during the selected periods of analysis. In Colombia the exploration included the bulletin *Justicia y Paz*, which preceded *Noche y Niebla* and was published from April 1988 until June 1996. All issues during that period were consulted. In South Africa, exploration included *Link/Skakel*, a publication that preceded *Exit* and was published from May 1982 until May 1985. All issues during that period were consulted. In both countries the exploration was extended a few years beyond the selected ending point: until 2010 in the case of Colombia, and until 2000 in the case of South Africa.

Both publications were explored in search of events of anti-homosexual violence. This was understood to include cases of violence related to the sexual orientation or gender identity of the victim(s). The publications offered different ways to define those events, and these definitions were considered in the search. They also framed those events in the context of their particular political violence. In the case of *Noche y Niebla*, a specific definition of political violence and conflict has been used to classify the events that are presented. Therefore, the connection between an event of anti-homosexual violence and the political context was established by those who created the database. *Exit* is a newspaper and offers information about a wide variety of forms of anti-homosexual violence. The connection between the anti-homosexual violence and the historical context is expressed in the way the event is presented.

The creation of a corpus of information that was relevant for the objectives of this research using the South African gay press presented a challenge. The events of violence reported in the South African gay press were not described with direct reference to the apartheid regime, or under a category that assumes a connection with socio-political violence, as was the case of archival material in Colombia. This creates the risk of over generalised information that may be random or limited to specific cases. What is more, the politics that influenced the reporting of events in *Link/Skakel* and *Exit* resulted from their attempt to target a mainly middle-class white male community. Assuming those risks was necessary for the purposes of

this research in order to find a starting point to analyse anti-homosexual violence in apartheid South Africa. Limitations and expected bias in information were complemented with other sources of information, such as secondary literature and interviews.

Link/Skakel was a monthly newsletter for the members of the Gay Association of South Africa (GASA). GASA was created in the early 1980s, mainly for and by white gay-identified men (Gevisser 1995). The position of GASA in relation to the apartheid regime was a matter of vigorous discussion. GASA's lack of support for the movement that protested the incarceration of the anti-apartheid and gay activist Simon Nkoli caused serious criticism of its political position in relation to apartheid and gay rights. GASA was accused of turning a blind eye to racism and violence against black South Africans (Gevisser 1995).

According to one of its founders, when GASA was falling apart in the mid-1980s and the decision to stop its publication was made, some of its editors decided to make it an independent communication media called *Exit* (Botha 2014). The name followed the idea of "coming out of the closet" that was becoming "a major worldwide movement" at the time, and the paper "aimed to give directions" (Botha 2014). *Exit* was seen as a "voice for South Africa's gay community" and a way to influence gay opinion in the country (Botha 2014).

Link/Skakel and *Exit* offer a variety of examples of anti-homosexual violence. These are sometimes reported as specific criminal activities, for example the robbery and killing of a (gay) man in his flat, but at other times they describe what is seen as a broad pattern of victimisation, such as the so-called gay bashing. The description of gay bashing could include forms of victimisation, such as harassment in cruising places, or assault that might be described without reference to the gay element in other cases. Frontiers between forms of victimisation were often blurred. References to police harassment might be mentioned in cases of police raids on gay venues or cruising places. But police harassment could also be mixed with gay bashing assaults when perpetrators claimed, possibly falsely, to be police members. Information was presented without sharp delimitations of events. They were incorporated in the archive created for this research with the attempt to maintain their original meaning. Their description, however, also attempts to unpack them in order to understand what was perceived at the time.

Archival information in South Africa does not follow a unified and permanent definition of violence. It changes with time and with broad

political and legal changes. It reflects a sense of victimisation that was also changing according to the audiences that were targeted by the publication, the sense of community that was created and the collective identities that were developing.

In the Colombian case, the consulted database offered an explicit definition of political violence that framed the documentation of events. Therefore connections between socio-political conflicts and events of anti-homosexual violence were documented to suit the purposes of those who created the database. Classifications of events have changed through the years but have used a language and categories related to international humanitarian law. *Noche y Niebla* created a category called "human rights violations and actions of social intolerance" to classify information:

> When the characteristics of the victims make it possible to infer that the reason for the violation of human rights is the elimination of people considered by the victimiser as dysfunctional or problematic for society, such as homeless people, drug users, beggars, prostitutes, homosexuals, delinquents. (Cinep and Justicia-y-Paz 1996, p. 18)

This definition is of relevance for this research because it reveals a way in which the connection between anti-homosexual violence and political conflict was made in the case of Colombia. Since the concept of "human rights violations" was associated with the actions of state agents and the concept of "violations of international humanitarian law" with the insurgency groups, the concept of socio-political violence allowed for the inclusion of events of violence committed by non-identified non-state agents. With that, the scope of events to be included was broad but keeping a socio-political horizon in mind. This can be seen in the definition of "socio-political violence committed by non-state non-identified actors":

> refers to what is committed by individuals, organisations or groups, specified or non-specified, motivated by struggles around political power or by intolerance towards other ideologies, races, ethnic groups, religions, cultures or social sectors, organised or not. This category is different from the previous one (human rights violations) because in this case it is not possible to identify a state or para-state initiator. (Cinep and Justicia-y-Paz 1996, p. 18)

It is under this definition that *Noche y Niebla* included a number of events of violence related with sexual orientation or gender identity. This

definition was maintained throughout the period researched. The inclusion of events of anti-homosexual violence varied according to the way in which victims of events of violence were named in the sources that supported *Noche y Niebla* databases.

The politics of knowledge that produced the information collected here imply two different kinds of "memory work" (Haug 1987). The South African gay press is more a depository of disparate memories that contains debates, events and images that illustrate what sectors of the South African gay community are considered relevant for it. In its attempt to be the voice of such sectors, it created a language and narrated a story. The database consulted in Colombia is the result of organised activism and accumulated expertise of human rights organisations.

Data Collection: Personal Narratives

Interviews covered a selected sample of activists, human rights advocates, public employees and leading academics in Colombia and South Africa. Interviews in South Africa were recorded in English and those in Colombia in Spanish. A total of 56 interviews were conducted, audio-recorded and used in the research. Following ethics protocol, all participants were informed about the research before being asked to give written consent to be interviewed.

Academic peers and personal contacts in South Africa helped to compile a directory of key names and current academics and activists who have had a leading role in the anti-apartheid struggles. The result was a sample of participants with high levels of expertise in the topic, most of them familiar with research procedures, rights lobbying and with being interviewed. Except for two, all the participants were interviewed in capital cities in the country (Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town), giving the sample a mainly urban profile. Of the 23 participants, 14 were at that moment working for national or international NGOs, while the others were distributed among academia and state institutions. Two did not have permanent jobs and lived in KwaThema, a township in the East Rand, Gauteng region. Twenty-one of the participants could be considered middle-class professionals. Of the 23 participants 20 were over 50 years old. Most were teenagers in the mid-1980s, when the anti-apartheid struggles were experiencing one of the most important peaks, and were young professionals during the transition to democracy in the mid-1990s. Five of them were

high school or university students in the 1970s. All of the participants agreed with the use of their real names in the research.

Participants interviewed in South Africa gave their consent to use their names. More detailed personal information or their full names were not used. At the moment of the fieldwork, Colombia was still facing armed conflict. For security reasons, it was decided not to use their names but pseudonyms, and to avoid information that would facilitate their identification.

Considering that the socio-political conflict has important regional characteristics in Colombia, the research focused on case studies in the Caribbean region. Using networks known to the researcher and with the collaboration of a local organisation, a list of participants was created and interviews were requested according to the ethics protocol authorised by the University of Sydney. The collection of personal narratives in Colombia followed the same sampling criteria used in South Africa. People connected with activism or academia who wished to participate were consulted, rather than direct victims of violence.

The result, in the case of South Africa, was a collection of narratives of mainly urban activists and NGO workers, with a secondary representation of academics and public employees. In Colombia, participants were from three of the main cities of the Caribbean region: Barranquilla, Cartagena and Santa Marta. Interviews were also conducted in Montería, a capital city in the Caribbean lowlands. Half of the participants were at that moment working as activists in local NGOs. The others were distributed between academic experts and regional public employees. Two of them were university students. Most of the participants in Colombia were in their 20s and early 30s. Only 5 of the 33 were more than 40 years old. The sample was made up of students and young professionals from working-class families in low-paid freelance occupations. Only two of them were middle-class full-time employees. Because of the current violence in Colombia, the names of the participants were changed for their protection.

In the case of activists and advocates, the interviews explored experiences of homophobic violence and how these events were incorporated in the memories of collective actors and in their processes of organisation and mobilisation. In the case of public employees, the interviews considered how state institutions reacted to those events, what kinds of public policy actions were developed or not, and why. Interviews with leading academics focused on the accumulation of knowledge on the

topic, on the participation of academics in bringing the situation to pub-lic attention, and their lobbying and mobilisation against homophobic violence.

Questions were designed to assist in the reconstruction of memories of events related to homophobic violence. Respondents were not requested to narrate personal experiences of violence. The questions could, however, lead participants to revisit memories of painful events. The researcher was always attentive to this, and protective measures were taken to avoid re-victimisation caused by recalling personal experiences. The fact that most of the participants in South Africa had had experience of being interviewed facilitated such a process. In the case of Colombia, the shared language, the recognition of the researcher as an expert in the field because of his previous experiences and the support of a local organisation ameliorated the possible traumatic effect of the interviews. Furthermore, the researcher was often asked by participants in Colombia to share his impressions of previous experiences in other places, which facilitated the creation of dia-logue and rapport during the interview.

This memorialisation of violence as part of identity construction was expressed in the narratives that participants shared for this research, and created tension from the start. Interviewing implies an act of remember-ing, and in this research, it could reiterate a suffering which participants could have been trying to overcome. What is more, remembering could be not only the recounting of a horrific experience, but also the reitera-tion of a position as a subordinated subject in the gender and sexual order.

Some participants shared experiences of violence as part of their politi-cisation of identity and of their struggles for dignity, as in the case of Funeka (Chap. 4). One example of this is the following excerpt from the field notes:

> Early in the interview, Funeka talked about her experiences of gender and sexual violence. Personal experiences of victimisation were not included in the interview protocol. I knew she had already disclosed those experiences in other public interviews. My first reaction to her references to sexual vio-lence was not to take them into account and to ask about another topic she had mentioned earlier. Though that was an important part of her story and with more confidence on my side, I was able to revisit the topic. She approached the interview with kindness and generosity. The fact that she was used to being interviewed facilitated the conversation. For me the inter-view was charged with contradictory emotions.

Other participants offered a narrative that struggled between forgetting some events and the need to remember them, as in the case of Nadia (Chap. 3). During several moments of the interview, Nadia mentioned that she did not remember certain aspects of her story. She could not offer information about the armed groups that were acting in the region where she was born. She introduced herself by explaining that she arrived in the Caribbean because her parents had passed away. Later in the interview she explained that after she was sent to live with her sister, things in the area went back to normal. Reducing these tensions between remembering and forgetting to a dispute between truth and fiction may be misleading. The interview was the opportunity to obtain some support by one of the interviewers and she engaged in the conversation he was leading.

Interviews were based on an oral history perspective instead of a question-answer structure. Participants in the research were involved with the creation of memories and collective histories of the groups they worked for, or to which they were related. Most of the persons interviewed in South Africa have had roles in documentation, analysis and transformation of apartheid violence. In the case of Colombia, a number of the participants were at that moment working for the recognition of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people as victims of the socio-political conflict, and involved in activities lobbying for rights.

Oral history narratives have been criticised because of the illusion of authenticity or transparency. Oral history narratives can perpetuate academic authority because of the connection between the speaker and the claim of authenticity of the narration. Feminist (Haug 1987) or queer researchers (Epprecht 2004) have used oral history not as a way to collect information, but as a process of engagement, expression, empowerment, reflexivity and collective organisation. Oral narratives also facilitate the expression of contradictions and dissident voices (Epprecht 2004, p. 233), instead of unified or homogenised narratives.

The fieldwork created new challenges in the understanding of the research problem. Interaction with research participants deepened previous concerns about what was meant by the "constructive and deconstructive power of violence" while keeping in mind the knowledge they offered regarding the interactions between personal lives and social structures. Personal narratives, fieldwork and the selection of archival material also required constant rethinking of what was classified as "sexual" and "violent," as well as the ascription of particular events to these categories.

One of the challenges was the need to understand lived experiences without reducing them to determinisms or to voluntarisms. Here, guidance was found in other explorations of what is produced by homophobic violence and sexual prejudices. Gail Mason (2002), for example, argues that violence is both a site of subjugation and a site of formation. For her, violence constitutes subordinated sexual subject positions such as "lesbians" or "gays." What violence cannot do is to dictate how the ones in those positions inhabit and resist those positions. With that in mind, she gives space to individual agency and to consider creativity in the interaction with structures of oppression. Though this perspective still uses a language of norms and regulations that tends to reduce subjects to disciplined populations and to limit their agency mainly to resistance—as if resistance were the only option. Lois McNay (2000) argues that the emphasis on subjectification in current analysis of gender, derived from Foucault and Lacan, overemphasises constraints and looks at agency only in terms of resistance or dislocation of norms. McNay argues instead for a "generative theoretical framework," which would foster understanding of the "creative and imaginative substrate to action."

Following this discussion on methodological terms, participants were seen as expert producers of knowledge. Their involvement in the transformation of violence in their countries has given them specialised knowledge: the knowledge they have acquired can be seen in terms of practical knowledge, a knowledge drawn from experience (Maddison and Scalmer 2006) that they use and transform in their work and activism. In this way, the oral histories they shared are narratives that involve complex interactions between research and practice, as has been considered in other approaches to oral history (Fals-Borda 1991). How these multiple forms of knowledge are part of the global geopolitics of knowledge (Connell 2007) is a topic examined in the last chapters of the book.

Data Management and Analysis

Information from interviews and from the archives was processed in two ways. In the research project, data management of personal narratives was planned using a methodology for the elicitation of open interviews. Interviews were expected to be coded using a codebook that followed the chosen theoretical perspective and the topics of interviews. If in the process of reading, marking and coding, new themes appear, the researcher created new codes to identify units of information belonging to a similar

cultural domain. This process of coding is called open coding and in vivo coding in software written for the analysis of qualitative information such as Atlas.ti and Nvivo 9. Following that style of interview analysis, after information is coded, it is associated in order to create new aggregations useful for research purposes.

This procedure was followed at the beginning of this research, but the results were unsatisfactory. The logic of categorical coding fractures the unity and fluidity that were at the core of the personal narratives. This method is useful as a way to index large amounts of information with standardised external categories; but impedes understanding of the silences, contradictions and several subtexts that constitute narratives such as the ones gathered here. The distinction made by Ryan and Bernard (2000) between the linguistic and sociological treatment of texts is useful here. For them, a linguistic treatment of texts looks at them as objects in themselves, while a sociological treatment considers them as windows to human experience (Ryan and Bernard 2000, p. 769).

Accordingly, a different strategy for data management was adopted during the analysis of data. Once transcribed, each personal narrative was read several times in order to create an index of the topics within that interview. Then, information was grouped by topic using a common template for all the interviewees. The template included four topics that were related to the themes of the research (gender and sexual orders; activism and mobilisation; violence as a lived experience; and transition conflict/ post-conflict) and four topics that were related to the interviewees and the interviews (how the interview went; life trajectory; residual information; and synthesis).

In order to facilitate visualisation, organisation and access to information, the software Mindjet MindManager Professional© was used. That software was selected for its easy access to the narrative as a unity and it allowed the researcher to focus on specific aspects as required. It also facilitated the visualisation of the same unit of information in different topics in order to understand associations. For example, a certain event of a life trajectory could also be relevant as an experience of violence. The chance to visualise the same event in association with both topics facilitated an understanding of its importance in the narrative.

This visual representation of interviews facilitated also a more organic approach to narratives and a multilevel analysis. In spite of differences in definitions of multilevel analysis (Blau 1993; Hox 2010; Ringdal 1992), the common ground is the call for an ecological and contextual analysis

of data in multiple and hierarchical levels of complexity. Applications of multilevel analysis in several social areas and in quantitative and qualitative research inspired the analytical strategy used in this research. Grabe (2012) employs multilevel analysis to explore structural and individual components of women's empowerment in the context of globalisation. Using a survey in which women were asked about structural, cultural, group, couple and individual aspects, the author was able to conclude that land ownership and organisational participation were related to a more progressive understanding of gender interactions, more control in interpersonal relationships and better levels of subjective well-being. Connell (2003) used multilevel analysis in educational research to understand how working-class families adapt to changes in the educational system in the context of a new labour market and neoliberalism. She also used that perspective in her study of masculinities (Connell 2005) to understand their changes, contradictions and continuities.

In this research, multilevel analysis was realised at the following levels:

- Individuals: this level is presented here in the personal narratives in which subjects interact with gender orders, political violence and transitions to democracy.
- Groups and organisations: where personal narratives are interconnected to illustrate collective experiences, as presented in Chap. 5.
- Public arenas: where archival material and personal narratives are connected to show how anti-homosexual violence becomes a matter of concern in activism and in the transitions to democracy, as in Chap. 6.
- State, country: where personal narratives, archival material and secondary information will facilitate the illustration of the changes, continuities and new developments in anti-homosexual violence during and after conflicts, as presented in Chap. 7.

The problems identified in multilevel analysis lead to the final discussion in Chap. 7. While for authors such as Currier (2010), homophobic violence is a particular type of violence that requires it to be analysed separately from other types of violence, for Bennett (2010) anti-homosexual violence is part of gender and sexual violence. In other words, while for the former such violence does not belong to a broader hierarchy of violence, for the latter, it is nested in the hierarchies of gender and sexual violence.

Multilevel analysis relies on the notion of levels that can be differentiated and on the ability of the researcher to do it. Kreft and Hox (1994) call attention to the problem of analysing data at one level and making inferences at a different level. That was a particular matter of concern when looking for the connections between anti-homosexual violence and the socio-political context in each country analysed. Another risk lies in the type of aggregation created, because what is considered a level can be in itself the result of several other sublevels. That problem was confronted in the initial analysis of archival material. Information related to different events of anti-homosexual violence was classified in the archive as if the events were a similar type of violence. The research showed that some events could be treated at one or at multiple levels of analysis. Chapter 6 illustrated this in detail using archival material.

The analysis in levels can lead to a linear reading of data, which impedes the understanding of complexities, juxtapositions and assemblages of elements coming from unequal levels. This risk was faced in personal narratives where situations that could be unique to a particular person could not be associated with general tendencies. In order to deal with that problem, a continuing assessment of events and subjectivities in their specific cultural and historical context was adopted. Since the perspective of activists and organisations was a relevant matter here, a continuous reconsideration of how group definitions are created, negotiated and contested was used, following an approach that researchers in sexualities have discussed (Gamson 2000).

Finally, there is a risk in the definition of the hierarchies of levels and the nestling of topics. That problem was encountered when describing what could be considered a "gender order" or a "gender regime," and the changes caused by conflicts. This issue is underlined at the end of Chap. 7.

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